Tab 1

IMPORTANT INFORMATION PLEASE READ:

WARNING:

This narrative contains abuse, suicide, self harm, sexual assault, rape, murder, gore, demonic creatures, Succubi and incubi, swearing, abandonment, fear, horror, smoking, alochol, and some slurs (I use these slurs because it expresses the characters more and I can use these slurs, I am a "F*gg*t" and "B*st*rd" myself.)

NOTE:

- **This narrative is in a chapter book style, but there are some images that I drew to help show the setting of the plot. I will give credits at the bottom for the bases I used for the drawings. I did make the drawings myself, but I struggle to pose the characters, so I do use bases sometimes to help me. I did make sure that the bases were Free To Use (FTU), also note that some of these drawings are older than others, so I struggled to find the original bases I used for some.**
- **I will not be responsible for your younger siblings/cousins etc. reading this. If you are under 14 years of age, please read with caution. I will not tell you that you can't read this, but I do give you a warning.**
- **Please be understanding that I am not a professional writer and I have never released my own narrative for the world to read. I'm okay with some small criticism, but please don't "nitpick" my work. I worked really hard on this.**

Just please keep all this in mind when reading.

Crisis line: 988 (if you or a loved one is struggling at all, help is here for you. Contact a crisis line if in need.)

That's all for the important information! Please enjoy!

A New Start (Sprout's POV)

I can't see much. All I can see is the big blonde cow with wings leaving through the door.

Why did he not hurt me?

I really thought he would rape me. He was fully undressed and had an aggressive look on his face when he took me here. Reminded me of Noah. In fact, I thought he was Noah.

He has big horns like Noah. He has big wings and a long tail like Noah.

Is he a dragon mix, too?

He was quite odd. He asked if I could see him a lot. He also knew my old name.

If he wasn't going to do anything to me, why was he naked? Why was he so eager to bring me here?

I realize that I haven't heard that voice in a while. It was screaming at me the whole time and while I was sitting on the bench. I look around the motel room.

"Hello? Voice?" I ask quietly.

No response.

I then left myself up from the bed and try to navigate myself to the bathroom. I open the door to the bathroom and begin to search the drawers for some scissors.

I can barely see through my fur but manage to feel around for the tool. I can feel a plastic substance that is slightly squishy. Toothpaste.

I continue my search and eventually find a pair of scissors. I lift them up to my eyes and carefully trip around my eyes, trying not to poke myself.

I can see the pieces of moss fur falling from my sight. After each piece falls, my vision grows.

I see my reflection in the mirror. I shake my head and let all the loose fur fall off my face.

My reflection is just me. There is no shadow figure.

Was it all in my mind? Or did he just not follow me?

I still question whether or not it was my conscience. Or if it was someone trying to mess with me.

It couldn't have been Noah, he was on the floor and I tripped over him when I tried running.

Who was it?

I then rinse off my face and brush my teeth. I look around the bathroom for some spare clothes, but there is nothing besides a robe. I then undress to get ready for bed. I slip into the robe and fold my clothes into a pile. I then set them onto the counter.

I then walk out of the bathroom and into the bedroom. I sit on the side of the bed, with my legs hanging off the side.

I can't stop thinking about that guy. He seemed so moody and like he had bad intentions, but he was so..sweet. It was really hard for me to talk about what happened. I almost lost my breath. I began to cry while talking to him. Although it was hard to talk about, I felt the need to talk about it. I had no one to talk to.

I thought he wouldn't even care about what happened to me. Last time I vented, all my friends pushed me away, but he listened. Not only did he listen, he.. hugged me. He even cried with me.

Why was he crying? Did someone ever do that to him?

That would make sense. He wasn't wearing anything. So maybe he just got raped. I know how it feels to be used. It doesn't feel good. It feels horrible.

I then lay back into the bed and tuck myself into the sheets. I pull the covers over my shoulders and close my eyes.

Will I ever see him again?

Narrator:

This next section is after Sprout and Otis met. Sprout stayed at the motel for another night and is now going to look for a job.

I change out of the robe and put on my clothes. I stare into the mirror as I scrape the plaque off my teeth with the tip of my claw. I look around the sink for a toothbrush, but can't find one. I open the drawer and only find a half empty tube of toothpaste. It is covered in dried paste and little hairs.

Disgusting.

I gag at the thought that I touched it last night without knowing what it looked like or what it was covered in.

I reach for the faucet and turn on the water. I clean my paws while scrubbing them roughly. I then rinse off my face to wake myself up. I use the water to clean my fur on top of my head. Then I comb my fur with my claws to make myself more presentable.

What kind of job should I get?

I need money to get by in life. Noah got paid pretty well from his job, but I don't want to have the same job as he did. I want to forget about him as much as I can. He hurt me to my core. He took advantage of me when he knew that I wouldn't fight back.

What if I did fight back?

Even if I had tried to fight back, he would only do me worse. He would hit me, push me down, and lock me in his room. He would do so many horrible things. Maybe even worse than what he had already done.

Stop! Stop thinking about him!

I need to get him out of my mind. I just need to get out of this motel and find a job. I will only cause that voice to come back to me if I keep thinking about Noah. I can't have that voice telling me what to do while I try to find a job.

I take one last glance at my reflection. I look up at the top of my head. I have a feeling that my mushrooms will drag attention to me. I hope that there are more plant based species out there.

I then turn for the door, leave the motel room, and out of the building.

I am walking down a bright and cheerful street. There are many people around. Everyone is smiling and having a good time. I can see many different species walking around. There are birds, dragons, dogs, cats, possums, and so many more.

I look over to my left and see little shops, lined up next to each other. They are painting with bright and beautiful colors. Their designs make my eyes want to stare at them. Each building is unique and special.

I can see book shops, bakeries, antiques, and restaurants. I look over to my right and see more shops and people. There is a coffee shop with outside tables. There are groups of people, young and elderly, just chatting and having a good time.

I look forward as I walk and see a carriage being pulled by some horses. They are dressed so nicely. There is a male cat riding the carriage. He has a mustache and a top hat.

I continue to stare at them with fascination as they pass by. They are going the other direction.

"Good day, sir!" Says one horse.

"G-good day to you, too!" I reply.

He smiles at me. I can see in his eyes that he is having a good time. He's not faking the grin. I smile back in return. The cat then waves goodbye to me with a big grin. I wave back.

I then look around for a place that could be hiring. I look to my left and then to my right. I continue walking.

I then spot a sign that says "Now hiring" on a building with lots of plants outside the door. I then make my way to the shop.

I stand outside the entrance, admiring the plants. I can see many different types of plants. There are flowers, bushes, small trees, and even fruits. I squat down to get a better look at the plants.

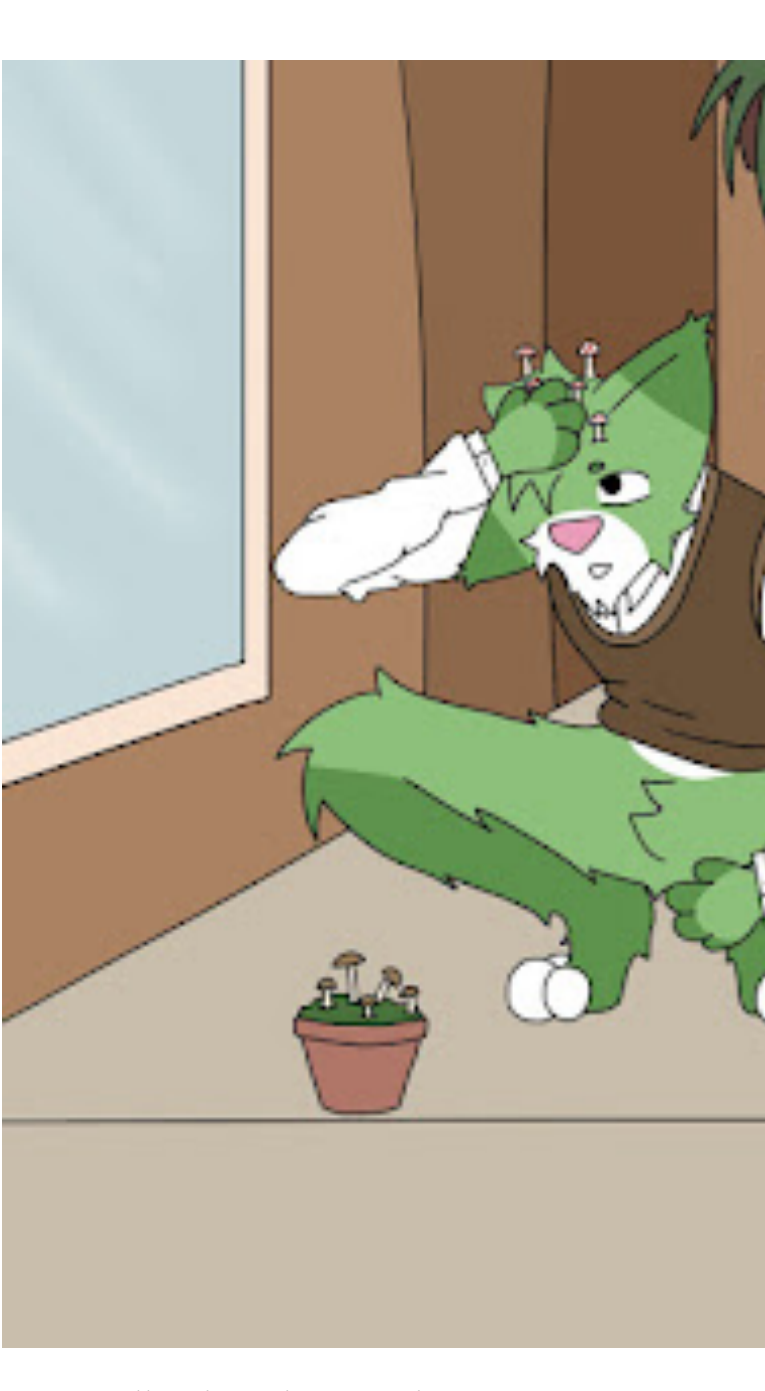
They are so pretty.

There is a small pot on the ground with moss and mushrooms. I tilt my head, fascinated by the potted plant. I reach out and touch the plant. Then I reach for my own mushrooms and compare the two. My mushrooms are smoother. The potted mushrooms are rough and have more texture.

I pull my paw away from my head and feel my arm. I touch the moss in the pot. My moss fur is softer and silky while the potted moss is dry and crunchy.

I notice that the potted mushrooms are brown. I remember that my mushrooms are red with spots on them.

Why are they so different yet so similar?



"Hello, sir!" I hear a voice.

I turn away from the pot and look around me, looking for the person speaking. I see in the doorway a black and scruffy dog. He has floppy ears and a small beard like me. He isn't wearing a shirt, but he's wearing tan colored shorts and a red bandana along with a cowboy hat.

"They're beautiful aren't they? I just love plants! How about you?" He asks.

I lift up from the ground and stand up straight. I notice that his fur is dripping with sweat. He's panting, too.

"Oh, yeah. I like plants. I just noticed the mushrooms." I reply with a smile.

He then comes over to my side and picks up the pot. He holds in infront of his torso.

"I love mushrooms! They are so interesting and unique! See?" He says with enthusiasm.

He then lifts the pot toward me, showing the mushrooms. He seems really happy to be around plants. Especially mushrooms.

I notice that he is looking up at my head. He is staring at my mushrooms.

"Oh! Why am I telling you about mushrooms?" He chuckles, "You should know more about mushrooms than me! I don't need to tell you about them!"

He assumes that I know a lot about mushrooms, but in reality I know almost nothing. I was only ever taught that I should hide my mushrooms because it makes me a freak. At least that's what my parents told me.

"Oh, I actually don't know all that much," I say, "I only just have them on my head."

"Oh, okay!" He seems to understand now.

He looks like he has more to say, but is holding back.

"Can I ask why you're panting and sweating?" I ask him politely.

"Oh, yeah! I was working out back in the garden. I work here! I mainly just take the plants and pot them for display." He explains.

"Oh, that's cool!"

If he works here, he probably gets paid. I wonder how much.

"Can I ask you a question?" He asks.

"Oh, okay! Go ahead!"

"Are those mushrooms real? Like are they clip-ons or are they a part of you?"

I've never seen someone so curious about my mushrooms. He seems like he is really interested in knowing more.

"Oh, they grow from my head." I respond.

"That's so neat! What about your fur? Is it moss?"

"Oh, Yeah it is."

"Do you have to get watered like a real plant? Do you have to trim off weeds sometimes? Do you eat dirt?"

He has so many questions. Too many to keep up with. I can't even answer them all because I don't know a lot about myself.

"Oh, ummm.." I hesitate.

I can see him change expressions. He goes from extremely excited to slightly regretful.

"Oh! Sorry! I should probably not ask too many questions. But as an employee of this shop, I have to ask this question."

I tilt my head. He is very energetic. He seems to jump from one topic to another very quickly. I can't even comprehend how he can think so fast.

"Oh, what's the question?" I ask out of curiosity.

"What brings you here today?" He asks very enthusiastically.

"Oh, I was looking for a job. I noticed there is a sign that says you're hiring."

"Oh, okay! Do you wanna come in and talk? I can get the manager and see if they wanna hire you!"

"Oh, alright! We can do that!"

This guy may be overwhelming to be around because he talks so much, but I kinda like just being able to have a conversation with someone without it being about sad stuff. This guy is just so positive and was so happy to meet me and know more about me.

"Oh! Where are my manners?" He starts talking again, "My name is Captain!"

"Oh, um, my name is S-Sprout!"

"Nice to meet you, Sprout!"

"Nice to meet you, too, Captain!"

Narrator:

Sprout then got to meet the manager of the shop and ended up getting the job. Now Sprout and Captain are on their way to get some coffee.

I am walking up the street with Captain. He said he knew a good place to get coffee and baked goods. I've never had coffee before, nor have I ever seen it in person.

My parents only ever drank beer and other alcohol, but occasionally soda. I never had much to drink besides some water, but even then, it wasn't that much. They would give me a plastic bowl and fill it half way every other day.

Captain and I finally make it to the entrance of the coffee shop. The windows are so shiny and clean. There are tables outside with chairs. Some people are sitting in the chairs, chatting while drinking coffee. One girl is having a salad and what seems to be her friend is having a small slice of cake.

"Here, I'll get the door for ya!" Says Captain.

He then swings open the door and holds it for me. He has a bright smile on his face.

"Oh, Thank you!" I say.

We then walk into the shop. I start to look around and see a small amount of people inside. Captain heads over to the ordering area and waits in line. I want to stay away from crowds of people because it stresses me out. So I decide to take a seat on the bench inside.

I sit down at the end of the bench and start to twiddle my paws. I continue to look around the shop and notice small details. The menu is a chalkboard and has pretty handwriting with small doodles.

I look over to my right and see a small family. There is a small kid, maybe 9 years old, and a baby in a stroller. I look around for their parents. I see two ladies go over to the children and hand the little boy a cupcake. One lady is walking and the other is in a wheelchair.

I think they are the parents.

One mother, the one in the wheelchair, is a bird with beautiful white feathers. She is wearing a pastel yellow dress with a flower on the front. The other mother is an insect of some sort. Possibly a moth. I notice that she has vines and flowers growing from her body. She has thorns on her elbows and knees. Her wings have a unique design and pattern.

"You're rocking those shrooms!" The bird lady shouts.

I jump from the sudden loud sound. Then look around the room.

"I'm talking about you, sir!" She chuckles.

I look back at the family.

"M-me?" I ask.

"Yeah! You look great!"

"Oh, twins! You look awesome!" Chimes in the moth lady.

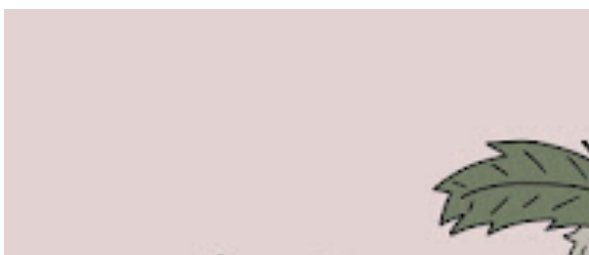
"Oh, thank you! You too!"

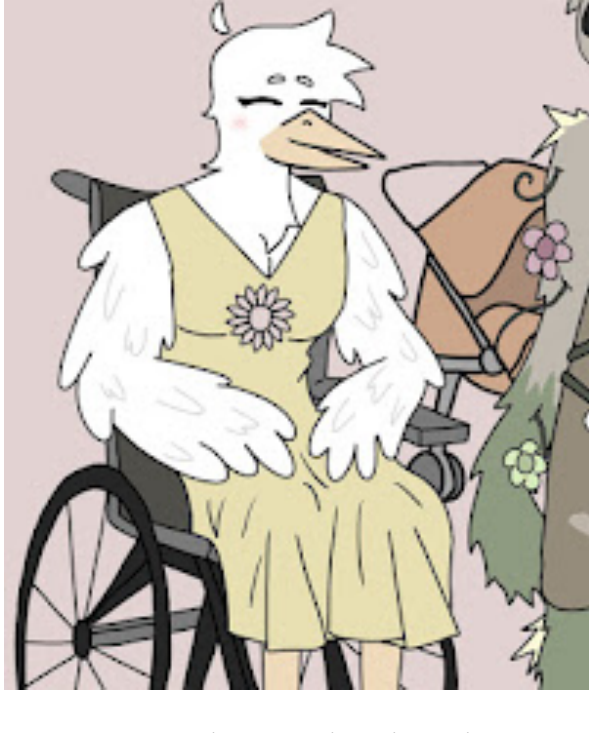
These ladies are so nice. But they don't even know me. I only just met them, but they are acting so friendly. I like this town, but I should still be careful with who I trust.

"Hey, Sprout! Do you like your coffee sweet or bitter? Also, do you want cream or just dark coffee?" Captain asks loudly from across the shop.

"Oh, um.. You decide! Surprise me!" I reply.

I then look back at the family. The two mothers are so joyful and happy. They are laughing with their son while he munches on his cupcake. He is a small fox. His fur coat is bright orange and his tail is extremely fluffy.





“You know? We need more plant based species in this town!” Says the moth lady.

“Oh, yes! You have a gorgeous moss coat, young man!” Adds on the bird.

“Thank you! I-” I want to return the compliment to each of them, “I like your dress! And I like your wings!”

They both smile and thank me. I haven’t gotten a proper compliment before. Except one from Captain and once from Noah.

“Well we gotta go. We need to get these kids home so they can sleep well tonight. This little fox has school tomorrow!” Says the bird lady.

“It was so nice meeting you, sir!” Says the moth.

“Oh, it was nice meeting you, too!” I reply.

Then the moth pushes the bird in her wheelchair out the front door of the shop and the little fox follows with the stroller. I wave goodbye to the little boy.

I noticed the family was a lot different compared to my family and even to what I had seen on television. This family had two mothers and they have a son that isn’t the same species as either of them.

Why was one lady in a wheelchair? She didn’t look like she had a broken leg.

I’ve never seen a person in a wheelchair without having a broken leg. On my mother’s television, they always have broken legs when they are in a wheelchair. I wonder why she was in one.

“Hey! I got your coffee! Let’s go sit outside!” Captain exclaims to me as he walks with two cups in his paws.

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I find an open table with two chairs outside. Captain ran inside to grab some napkins because he spilled his drink when he tripped on the doorway.

He’s a little clumsy.

I let out a small chuckle to myself. I then reach out for my cup of coffee and hold it in my paw. I’m nervous, but excited to try it. I don’t know what to expect it to taste like.

Will it be sweet? Will it be sour? Spicy maybe? Will it even be good to drink?

“Okay, I’m back! I decided to get some tea in replace of the coffee.” He laughs.

He takes the napkins and wipes down the table. I can see the tissues soak up the liquid quickly. He then tosses the soaked napkins into the trash can behind his chair.

“So, how’s your coffee?” He asks me while he takes a seat.

“Oh, I haven’t tried it yet. I’ve never actually had coffee before.” I admit.

He looks surprised, but not upset. He just seems neutral about it.

“Oh, that’s okay! Are you nervous to try it? You don’t have to drink it if you don’t want to.” He assures me.

“I’m a little nervous about trying something new, but I may as well try it. I might like it.”

“That’s the spirit!”

I lift the cup up to my mouth, but hesitate to put my lips on the lid. I can feel the heat flowing through the hold onto my lips. It’s so warm. A pleasuring warmth. I can smell the scent. Smells like cinnamon.

Reminds me of the time that my mother spilled the cinnamon all over the floor. My father wasn’t happy at all. He called her a bitch and said she was a failure. I think he told her to bake him something, but she messed up and just made a mess instead. He hit her a lot. She would cry out for him to stop, but never did.

I try to forget the past memories and just try to drink the coffee. I slowly bring the coffee to my lips and tilt it enough to get a little bit. The warm liquid pours into my mouth and splashes onto my tongue.

“How is it, Sprout?” Asks Captain.

I try to come up with the words to describe it. It’s very sweet. Definitely has a lot of sugar. It’s milky and creamy. It’s a pleasing taste, but it’s very strong.

“I like it! It’s not my all time favorite, but I like it! It’s good!” I say joyfully.

“I’m glad you like it! You should try some tea!” He says.

“What’s tea?” I ask.

“Coffee is made from beans, while tea is made from herbs, fruits, and roots!” He explains., “Try mine!”

He scoots his cup over to my side of the table. He has a bright smile and seems excited for me to try it.

“Oh, okay. Thank you!” I thank him.

I hold the cup in my paws. This drink is green and has ice in it. I can feel the cold water running from the sides. I then take a sip from the hole on the lid.

The flavor is bitter, but still sweet enough for pleasure. It doesn’t taste anything like coffee. It’s how I imagine a plant to taste with sugar and cream on it. I like how it’s not so strong and not too sweet.

“Oh, wow! I love this! I think this is my favorite!” I exclaim with excitement.

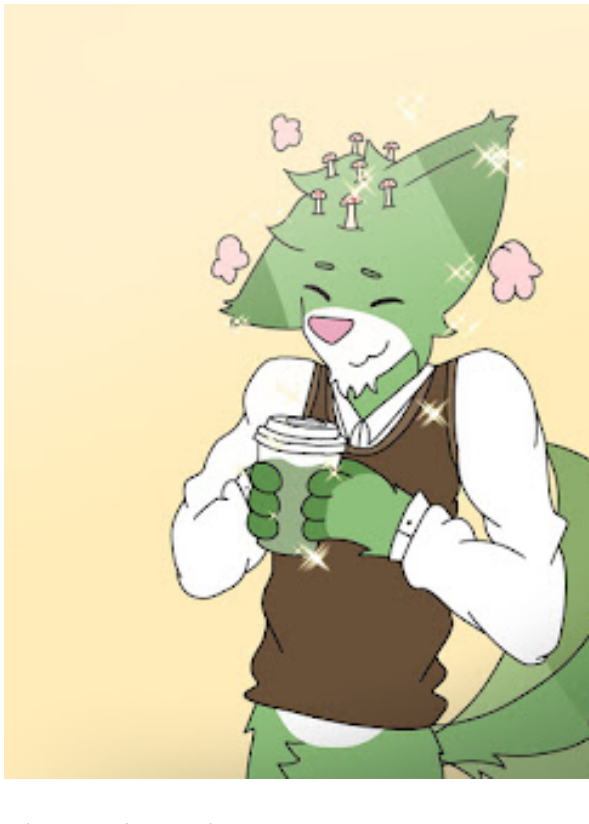
“I’m glad you like it! Tea has many different flavors. This one is called, ‘matcha.’ But I usually prefer fruity teas.” He explains.

“I love matcha! It’s delicious!” I laugh with joy.

I can feel my tail start to wag back and forth. I have a big smile on my face from the pleasing flavor of the tea. I’ve never had something so yummy to my liking. Most of the time when I was with Noah, we just ate cup ramen, eggs, and bread.

But matcha has got to be my new favorite thing to drink.

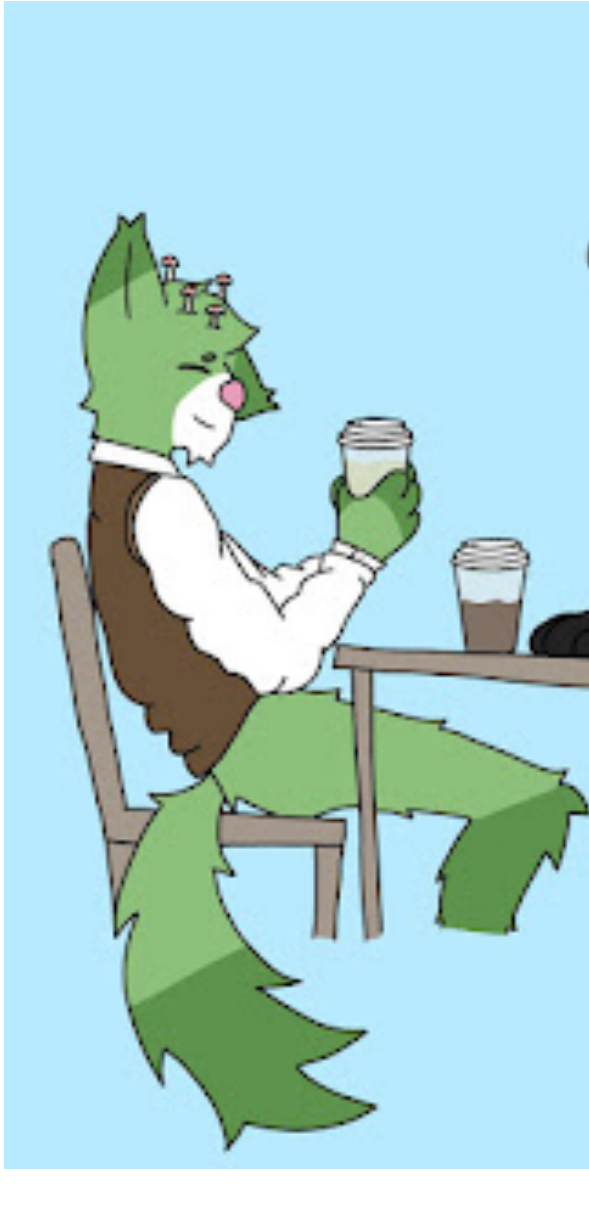
So yummy!!!



We laugh together. Then we start to get to know each other. We are gonna be co-workers and should know a bit about one another. We share some happy experiences with one another and share our interests. He is very passionate about helping others and he loves to meet new people.

He is so nice and friendly. He constantly wants to tell me everything, but also wants to hear what I have to say. He loves to have conversations with me. To be honest, I love talking to him, too.

Is this what real friendship feels like?



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Narrator:

Sprout and Captain say their goodbyes for the day. Sprout then leaves that part of town and makes his way back to the motel.

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I walk down the hallway of the motel toward my room. I come to a stop in front of the door and pull out the keycard to unlock it. I lift up the card to scan it on the door, but pause. I hear something.

What was that?

I heard a thud. I look around the hallway, but don’t see anyone else. I look back at the door. My paw is shaking. I then place my ear against the door and try to listen for another sound.

I hear something. It’s soft, quiet, but aggressive. It’s the sound of breathing. No. Panting. I begin to tremble and pull away from the door.

Who is there?

I don’t know what to do. I can’t run away. I need a place to stay. But what if I open the door and there's a bad person in there?

What if it’s Noah? Or my parents?

I shake my head and try to be brave. I have to go in anyway, I can’t just sleep outside. That’s more dangerous. Plus, it could be a working employee.

I lift my card back up and try to scan it. The door beeps. The scanner turns red for a second. I try again, but fail.

Shoot! I didn’t pay for another night!

I can’t get into my room. I’m gonna have to stay outside for the night. I don’t have any money. I will be able to start my job soon and then pay for another night, but for now, I will have to wait.

I turn to leave the motel, but immediately hear the door click behind me. I slowly turn back and see the door cracked open. There is a small pink light shining on the floor and climbing up the wall on the other side of the hallway.

What is that?

I don’t know what to do. I could just ignore it and leave like I planned or see what it is. It’s too risky to check it out.

But I need the room to sleep in.

I could go into the room and see what it is, but there's a possibility that it’s a dangerous person in there.

I take a step toward the cracked door, trembling. I’m still questioning whether I should go in or not.

Screw it.

I slowly walk to the door and place my paw on the knob. The pink glow shines in my face and blinds me for a second. I push open the door and slowly walk in. As soon as I walk in, the glow darkens.

I look around, but can’t see much. I look over by the bed and see the pink light shining from behind.

Is someone hiding?

I try to find something to use as a weapon just in case, but can't find anything. I then plan on just using my claws if needed.

I slowly make my way over to the bed and have my claws ready. I’m standing on the opposite side of the glowing pink.

“Is someone there?” I ask nervously.

I hear a quick thud and the light shakes.

“Ow!” Exclaims a familiar voice.

I jump from the sudden noise and voice.

“W-who are you?!” I ask, trembling.

The light then begins to dim and then goes out. It’s pitch black. I can’t see anything but darkness. I go into a panic, not knowing who is there or what they will do. I turn around and dart for the light switch. I then trip on my own foot. As I fall, my paw hits the light.

The lights flick on. I scramble to my feet and try to stand upright. I get into a stance of protection with my claws out.

It’s him.

Sitting on the edge of the bed is the cow with wings and a long tail. He came back. But why?

“W-what are you doing here?” I ask while relaxing my body.

He doesn’t answer. He is looking down with his hooves in his lap. His wings are tucked and his tail is laying on the bed.

“Hello?” I say quietly.

He lifts his head. There are tears.

“Are you okay?” I ask.

He looks like he is in pain. Both emotional and physical. His eyes are red and look sore. His fur is messy and scruffy. His horns look damaged but still intact.

Why is he back?

He is a little different than I remember. He is still not wearing clothes though. I still don’t understand why he isn’t dressed. Last time I saw him, he looked well put together. He was clean, tidy, and smelled good. I would expect him to be able to afford clothes. He was the one who paid for the room in the first place.

“I’m sorry for barging in, Sprout.” He apologies softly.

He looks up from his lap and into my eyes. I can see distress and pain. I can read his emotions with a single glance. He’s scared.

Of what?

“It’s alright,” I say, “Why are you here? Shouldn’t you be back at your place?”

He looks away from me. Seems as though he doesn’t want to talk about it. Maybe he’s running away like I did.

Does he have abusive parents, too? Or did someone use him like how I was used?

“I don’t know how to explain it. Could I just stay the night here? I have nowhere else to go.” He asks.

I would like to help him, but I only met him yesterday. He just came up to me and brought me here forcefully. I was terrified that he was gonna hurt me like Noah did. But he didn’t do anything to me. He just ended up listening to me vent and..he cried for me.

I stand in front of him and debate whether or not I should let him. I still don’t trust him one hundred percent, but he was there to listen to me vent. He ended up crying and giving me a hug. He sympathized for me and paid for me to stay the night at the motel.

I want to help him like he helped me. I don’t know what he’s going through, but the least I can do is give him a place to stay. It’s the right thing to do.

“Of course you can. If you need anything at all, just let me know.” I reply to his question.

He looks back at me and stands up from the bed, still unclothed. His wings are tucked and his tail is still.

“Thank you, Sprout.” He says.

As he says my name, I realize that he never told me his name. I just keep calling him the cow with wings.

“No problem. Um, could I ask what your name is?” I ask.

“Oh, my name is Otis. Sorry I never told you.” He says.

“Oh, it’s alright! Don’t need to apologize, Otis.”

“By the way, where would you want me to sleep? There is only one bed.” He asks.

He has a point. I try to come up with a way for us to sleep without having to share a bed. I don’t think that he will do anything to me if we share a bed, but I just would be uncomfortable if we did. He also might be uncomfortable with it.

“I could sleep on the floor with some pillows?” He mentions.

“I don’t want you to be cold. Should I go find a blanket for you? It will keep you warm and make the floor less hard.” I explain.

He agrees and tries to help me find some spare blankets. I begin looking in the bathroom under the sink. I couldn’t find anything besides some dirty towels and a half empty gas station cup.

I walk back out of the bathroom and help Otis search in the closet. We could only find some old shirts and a pack of cigarettes. Otis was still searching through the closet when I went to sit on the bed for a break.

I watch Otis search through the closet. He starts through old shirts behind him and they land on the floor. His wings are covering his back side so I can’t see his revealed body. I’m honestly glad. I was pretty uncomfortable looking at him.

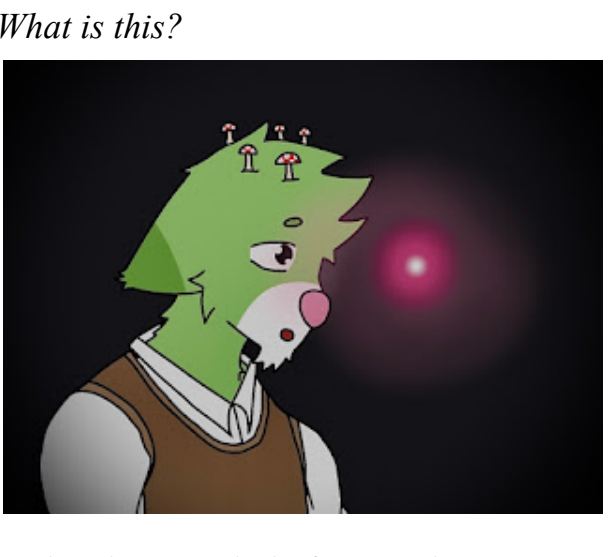
He then comes back out of the closet with a pink sweater. He is holding it with his hooves in front of his crotch. I turn away even though he is covered enough. Just seeing him holding it like that reminds me of how Noah was holding the towel back then.

“I’m gonna go change in the bathroom real quick.” Says Otis.

I nod while still facing the other direction. When he shuts the bathroom door, I look back at the closet. In the closet, I can see something. A light. The light is small, but bright. It appears to be an orb of some sort. It’s white.

I get up from the bed and walk over to it. I am standing a few inches from it, observing. It’s small, really small.

What is this?



Is this the same light from earlier?

I completely forgot about the light that was shining behind the bed. After the light shut off, I turned on the room light, then saw Otis on the bed.

Was Otis making this light? Or did it happen to be next to him?

I stare at the shining orb and examine it. It slowly moves around. I reach out my paw to touch it, but it quickly moves down.

What the-?

I try once more, but then it moves again to the right. I struggle to touch it. No matter what I do, I can’t get to it.

I then hear the bathroom door open. I look over to Otis and see that he is wearing the pink sweater. It has a little strawberry on the front, matching his tail. He is holding a pack of cigarettes in his hoof. He must have grabbed them from the closet from earlier.

“Hey, I put on some clothes because I didn’t have any on. Sorry if I made you uncomfortable. I..just..never owned any before.” Explains Otis.

“Oh, well thank you for doing that. I’m sorry that you’ve never had any clothes before. I only ever had one shirt for most of my life. So I understand.” I say.

It’s sad to think that I was naked from birth all the way to 13 and then only had one shirt for 4 years of my life, but I can’t even imagine having to walk around naked for my entire life. Who knows how old Otis is? If I could guess, he’s probably 20 or 21.

Otis then spots the pink orb floating next to me. His face changes expressions. He looks confused.

“Oh, yeah. I found this light and I don't know what it is.” I explain.

He then walks over to the orb beside me. He is inspecting the small light. He watches it very carefully.

“Whenever I try to touch it, it moves away.” I mention, “No matter what I try, I can’t touch it.”

Otis doesn’t respond. He inches closer to the glowing orb and tries to touch it as well. It moves once again, but not as dramatically. His face changes once more.

“Do you know what it is?” I ask.

“Um.. I think I do..” He replies, “But I’m not for sure.”

His face looks annoyed, but also..glad? I can’t tell what he is feeling. He has so many emotions expressed on his face.

“What do you think it is?” I ask.

He doesn’t answer. He might know what it is, but won’t tell me.

but won't tell me.

What is he hiding?

The orb then moves closer to Otis. My eyes are focused on the light. It begins to slowly spiral around him. Otis and I watch the orb spin.

"Is it-" Otis begins to speak.

I stay quiet. He seems genuinely confused, but excited.

"What is it doing?" I ask.

"Well.. you mean 'she' not 'it.'" He says.

I stand there confused. I continue to watch the orb and then look at Otis' eyes. He looks glad, but also annoyed.

The orb then moves away from Otis and onto the ground. The light starts to flash. It's so bright. The light goes dark and then light, over and over again.

"I would stand back, Sprout." Otis says as he lightly pushes me behind him.

I flinch from the sudden touch, but do as he says. I don't know what's happening or what it is. Otis seems to know what it is, so I should listen to him.

The light then stops flashing and just dims. I watch carefully, keeping my distance. The light then quickly flashes to its brightest. I can't see anything. I am blinded by the sudden brightness. I keep my eyes closed and hide behind Otis.

"Hey, bestie!!!" I hear a feminine voice.

A girl?

Otis lets go of me and steps away. I decide to open my eyes and see what is going on. I can see Otis standing with his wings stretched out. He is covering who is standing in front of him.

"What are you doing here, Ve?" Otis asks.

Who's Ve?

"I just..wanted to stop by to see my best friend!" The girl says.

I slowly start walking toward the two of them. I can see a tall, brown, feminine raccoon. She is wearing a hot pink crop top and some fishnets. She has short hair and beautiful light brown squiggles in her fur. I look down at her legs and see she is wearing some leg warmers.

"Eyes up here, buddy." She says.

I look up quickly at her face. She has makeup on. She looks kinda masculine around the face. She has a look of annoyance while she looks into my eyes.

"Oh! Sorry! I didn't mean to-" I go into a panic.

"Venus, he was just checking out your outfit," Otis explains to her. "Don't worry. He's chill."

"Oh, well sorry, hon. I thought you were interested." She says.

"Knock it off. Just tell me why you're actually here." He demands.

"Oh, did you not miss me? I thought you would be happier to see your bestie."

"I did miss you, but I want to know why you're actually here."

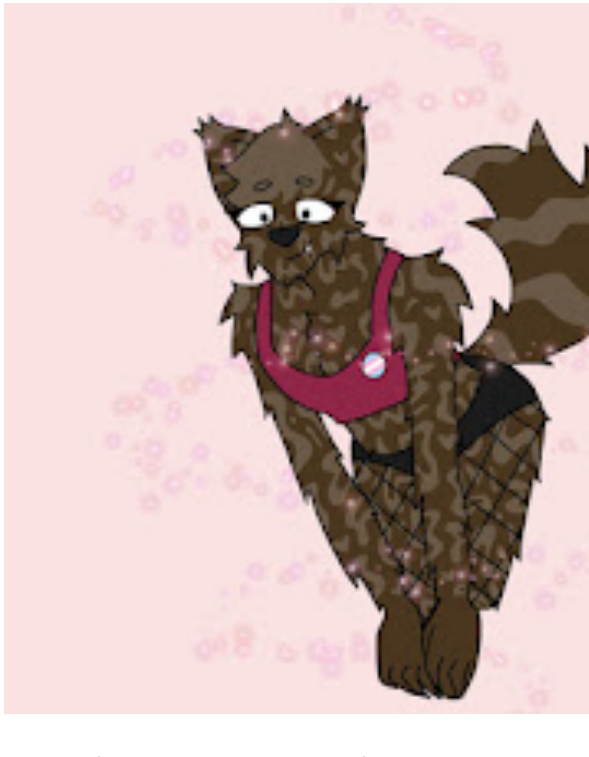
I turn from one to the other as they speak. Otis keeps calling her "Venus" or "Ve." That's probably her name.

"I already told you. I'm just here to visit." She sounds annoyed.

She then looks over to me. She's taller than me by a few inches.

"Otis, aren't you gonna introduce me to this little cutie?" She says with a flirty voice.

She leans down with her claws on her knees. She stares into my eyes and then looks up at my mushrooms. I don't know how to react so I just cover my head with my paws.



"I like your shrooms, Wyatt." She says.

I flinch from her words. That name haunts me.

"His preferred name is Sprout." Otis steps in.

He uses his hoof to pull me closer. I can't tell the relationship between the two. They seem upset at each other, but just a minute ago, Otis looked happy to see her.

"Oh, so you're trans? What are your pronouns?" She asks.

Trans? Like transgender? I'm not trans?

"Uh.. No. I just don't like the name my parents gave me." I explain.

My voice is soft and slightly shaky. I notice that I am being shy and quiet.

"Oh, my bad, sweetie! I must've gotten the wrong idea."

I am still confused on who this is and how she got here from the orb. She was just a little ball of light and then appeared out of nowhere. Plus, Otis knows her. Are they friends?

"We will have to talk later about this." Otis says to her.

"Not much to talk about, but okay." She pouts.

I stand next to Otis and just listen to them talk or at least try to. I start zoning out and their voices start to buff out. I can't stop thinking about the light. The pink light was there before Otis appeared, but I couldn't see any orb, just the light. Then Venus appeared from the orb just now.

What does the light have to do with anything?

"Oh, sorry. I forgot to introduce you two properly." Says Otis.

He grabs Venus and pulls her close to me. She smiles and puts out her paw. I jump a little from the quick movement.

"This is Venus and this is Sprout." Otis says.

"Nice to meet you, hon!" Venus grabs my paw and shakes it.

"Uhh.. nice to meet you, too, Venus." I say as she shakes my paw up and down.

"You're a nervous one, aren't you?" She says.

I open my mouth to speak, but am interrupted by Otis.

"That's enough. I think it's time for you to leave."

"Girl, what? I want to have a sleepover!" She exclaims.

Otis doesn't say anything but looks at her with a certain face that tells her to back off. She lets go of my paw and backs up.

"Oh, alright.. I'll see you tomorrow then, Otis?" She asks.

"Maybe." Otis replies.

She then spins around and turns back into the orb. She floats around for a minute and then disappears. Then Otis lets go of me.

"Sorry about her. She's a lot to handle sometimes. She doesn't social cues very well and just has too much energy." He explains.

"Oh. It's okay. She wasn't bothering me." I assure him.

I look up at Otis and see that he is stressed. I can see him breathing fast and his face looks tense.

"Are you okay, Otis?" I ask, concerned.

He shakes his head and then looks back at me.

"I'm fine, don't worry," He replies, "Let's just go to bed."

"Oh, okay."

—--

Narrator:

Sprout ended up sleeping in the bed and Otis slept on the floor with some towels and a pillow. The night was normal and they didn't have any issues sleeping.

—--

Making a Change (Otis' POV)

I wake up on the floor, covered in dirty towels. My pillow is two feet away from my head. The floor is sticky and dusty. It wasn't very comfortable to sleep on.

I get up from the floor and stretch out my limbs and wings. Then I flick my tail. I look over at Sprout and see him sleeping. He looks so peaceful, but he also looks scared. He is the anxious type, even in his sleep.

His eyebrows are squished and his face is wrinkled. He is biting down, making his teeth scratch against each other. I can see small drops of tears in his eyes.

Has he been crying all night?

I start thinking about how Venus was acting last night. She was acting weird. She randomly shows up here in the mortal realm just to say "hi?" She must've been lying. We aren't allowed in the mortal realm unless we are doing tasks. She didn't look like she was in a hurry to do a job of any sort. Plus, it's her time off.

Why was she here? Why was she lying?

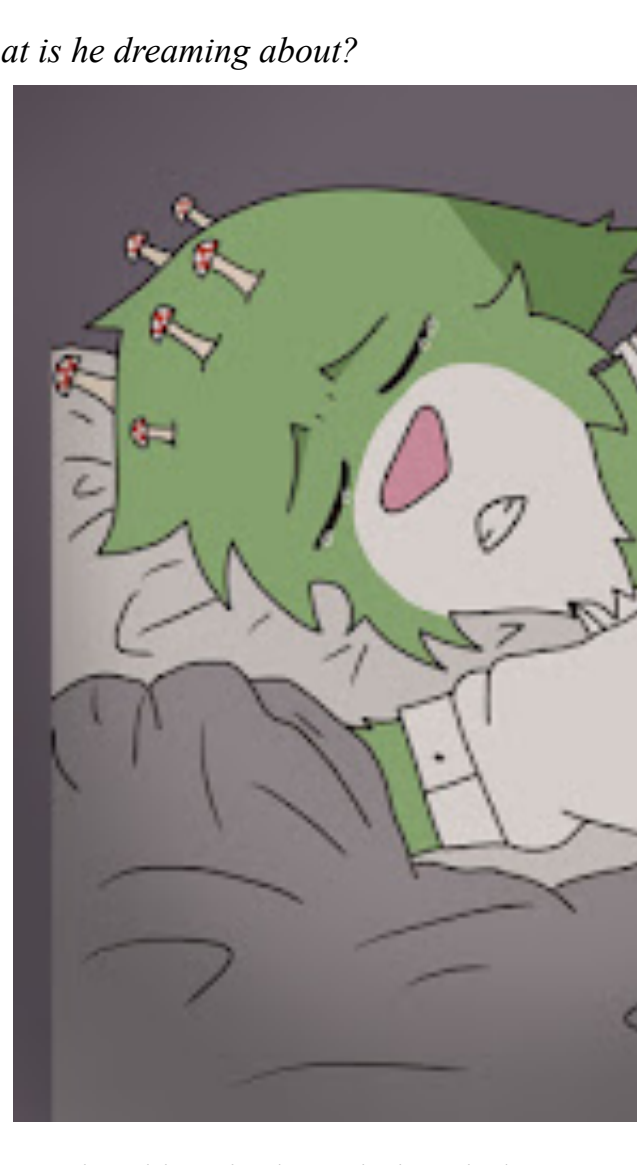
Last night, I was so worried about what would happen. I was just possessed by the boss and then he opened a portal here. I could see Sprout looking at me, but I couldn't control myself. It was Satan wandering around the motel room, but in my body.

I was terrified that the master was going to make me rape Sprout. I wish I could've gone somewhere else to stay, but if I tried, the master probably would've stopped me.

I suddenly hear Sprout groan. He sounds like he's in pain. I lean down to check on him. I inspect his face and see that he's crying again. Not much, but he's definitely tearing up.

I notice that the blankets are thrown off of him. He must've had a rough sleep. He is holding the covers in one of his paws. He is holding it tightly and I can see his whole body tensing up.

What is he dreaming about?



The sunrise shines in through the window and rests on his face. The light makes him appear to be glowing.

He's so handsome.

I can't seem to take my eyes off him. He looks so peaceful and I just have the urge to climb in bed with him. I bet his fur is super soft.

Shit! No! I can't think that way!

Why do I keep having these thoughts? I can't even think about it without thinking that something bad is going to happen. Sprout has gone through so much, I couldn't even think about touching him. Not even in a sexual way. Even with just a pat on the shoulder, he would flinch and get scared.

But I'm more scared of Satan taking over and making me do things to Sprout. I can't even imagine what that would feel like. To even think about what I've done in the past, it's terrifying on my end. How would it feel for the victim?

I start to cry from guilt. I don't know why I was born like this. I don't know why I was taught to do this. I wish I could go back and just kill myself before the master even had a chance to teach me such things.

No! I can't just blame someone else for my actions! I need to take the blame because I'm the one who did it.

I start to think about what could happen to Sprout if I stay. I want to leave, but if I try, Satan will probably take over. I have to do whatever I can to avoid him controlling my body. What can I do? I can't stay or leave.

Ugh!

I can feel the drops of tears roll off my cheeks. I use my hooves to wipe them away. I can see some tears splash onto the carpet floors, leaving dark spots where they landed.

I start to hear Sprout mumbling something. I look back at him and notice that he is squirming around. He is slightly kicking his legs and gripping the covers tighter. He appears to be trying to crawl away.

"I don't want to, Noah.." He mumbles with frustration.

He keeps mentioning Noah. That's probably the name of the guy who used him. From what Sprout has told me, he doesn't seem like a good guy. He sounds horrible.

But I can't be talking. I'm no better.

I think what I'm most scared of is letting Sprout down. He has shown some trust in me after a bit. He let me grab him when Venus was here. I felt bad for touching him so suddenly, but I wanted to show Venus that she needed to give him some space. She doesn't quite understand social cues very well, so I have to make it clear to her when I want her to stop whatever she's doing.

The thing is..if Sprout finds out why I actually brought him here, he would be even more traumatized. He wouldn't trust me..he wouldn't trust anyone ever again. I feel bad for lying, but I don't want to hurt him more by telling the truth.

"No. No. No!" Sprout jumps from the bed.

He is panting hard and his eyes are wide open, filled with tears. He is trembling aggressively. I can see his chest getting bigger and smaller over and over again. He is struggling to breathe.

"Hey, you're okay. It was a dream." I whisper, trying to calm him down and assure him that he is safe.

He doesn't respond. He just runs his claws through his fur and leans over. He is still panting and can't seem to catch his breath. I don't know how to help. I've never really been in a situation like this. I want to comfort him, but I don't think he wants to be touched right now.

"I-I-I'm s-s-" He studders.

"Hey, don't feel like you need to talk right now. Just breathe and try to calm down." I whisper.

Tears are rolling down his face and onto the covers. He is still holding onto the blankets with one paw. He has a strong grip. I can see his fur starting to grow again around his eyes.

Why does it do that?

"Hey, I'm gonna go get some trimmers for your fur." I say.

I get up and head toward the bathroom. I search through the cabinets and drawers for some scissors. I dig around and find them sitting next to a half empty toothpaste tube.

"Hey, are you ready to trim up around your eyes?" I ask as I walk out of the bathroom.

"I-I think s-so." He is sniffling as he speaks, "I-I'm s-sorry for w-waking you up."

"You didn't wake me up. I was already awake. But don't apologize. All that matters is that you're safe." I assure him.

He opens his mouth to speak, but I stop him and let him know that he doesn't have to explain. I want him to calm down and actually be able to breathe.

"Just let me know when you're ready to cut the fur around your eyes." I say.

He begins to calm down and stops crying. He uses the covers to wipe away the leftover tears on his face.

"Do you mind if I sit on the bed?" I ask.

I want to make sure that he feels safe around me enough to sit by me. I don't want to get into his personal space and make him uncomfortable.

"I don't mind." He replies.

I then sit down on the edge of the bed. I carefully hand him the scissors for him to trim his fur. When he takes it from my hoof, I notice that his paws are very shaky. He tried to bring them up to his eyes to cut the excess fur, but I decide to stop him.

"Your paws are a bit shaky right now. I don't want you to hurt yourself." I explain, "Can I do it for you?"

He looks at his paws and then looks back at me. He opens his paw and hands me the timmers.

"Just be really careful, okay?" He says softly.

"Don't worry, I will be." I assure him.

I take the scissors and lift them up to his face. I notice that he had backed up a bit. He probably isn't ready for me to get too close to him. I am still just a stranger after all.

"Can you close your eyes just in case?" I ask.

"Oh, yeah."

I carefully move them closer to his eyes and open them. I start to trim the fur away. The mossy fur falls down and drifts to the covers of the bed. As I'm cutting, some of the fur stays on his face around his eyes, making it hard to cut the rest.

"Do you mind if I use my hoof to move the fur?" I ask.

He sits quietly for a moment.

"I don't mind." He replies.

I carefully use my hooves to brush off the fur. Then I continue to trim around his eyes. Slowly, I start seeing his eyes again. They are closed tightly. His eye lashes are long and pretty. They are a dark green and look like blades of grass.

"Alright, I finished." I say softly.

He uses his paws to wipe off any excess fur and then opens his eyes. He blinks and looks around for a small moment. His eyes are dark brown, like dirt or soil. I can see his eyes glimmering in the light.

"Thank you, Otis." He says softly.

"Of course. If you ever need anything, I'm here to help." I assure him.

He suddenly flinches and then turns away from me. I must've said something that threw him off.

"Sorry, I don't know why I flinched at that." He apologizes.

"Don't be sorry. You have told me some of your scary experiences, so I understand how some words can bring you back to that moment with a certain person." I explain.

I can see him let out a slight smile. He seems thankful that I can understand. But to be honest, I really don't understand. I wish I could feel what he feels so I can actually understand what he needs.

Can I even feel the same way as a mortal?

"Thank you." He says softly.

"Of course." I smile.

—--

Narrator:
Sprout and Otis then went to breakfast to eat, but the motel didn't have anything good. So they decided to go on a walk down to the place that Sprout will be working and grab a bite on the way.

—--

It's still pretty dark, but the sky has a beautiful orange glow. The clouds are bright pink, my favorite color. The orange fades into a light purple, then to a baby blue.

I look back down at Sprout, walking beside me. The light shines onto his soft fur and makes him appear to glow. I can see each silky strand of fur. They look more like moss than fur. Some look like blades of grass.

"Have you been to this part of town before?" Sprout asks.

"Uh, no. I haven't." I reply.

"It's really nice! It has tons of shops and cafes!" He explains.

"Well in that case, I can't wait!" I chuckle.

Sprout seems really excited to come to this part of town. He did say that he was going to start working at a plant shop down here. Maybe he's excited to show me around.

As we pull up to the town, I can see quite a bit of people walking around. It's not overcrowded, probably because it's still pretty early. I see groups of people hanging out. Some are shopping, others of people hanging out. Some are shopping, others are eating.

Sprout suddenly gasps, “Look! It’s, Captain!” He exclaims.

“Who’s Capt-” I start to ask.

Sprout grabs my hoof and drags me forward. He pulls me over to a big, black dog. Then lets go of my hoof.

“Hi, Captain!” Sprout greets him.

“Hey, Sprout!” Captain replies.

The dog is tall, but shorter than me, around Sprout’s height. He is wearing a pair of tan shorts, a red bandana, and a cowboy hat. I notice that he has floppy ears, while Sprout has sturdy ears.

I listen into their conversation.

“How have things been for you?” Captain asks.

“I’ve been good. How are you doing?” Sprout replies.

“I’m good!”

Sprout then glances over to me. I smile. Then he looks back at Captain.

“Oh, yeah! I think you would want to meet someone, Captain!” Sprout says, excited.

Fuck!

I realize that I still can’t be seen by mortals. Captain will think Sprout is crazy.

Wait.. How come Sprout can see me?

When I first met Sprout, he could see me then, too. Why is that? I never found out. He’s a mortal and I had my invisibility on. That doesn't make sense.

Is my power going away? But how? That’s not possible unless Satan takes it away.

I gotta think fast. I can’t let Captain think that Sprout is crazy. I quickly run off to a nearby store and turn off my invisibility. Then run back to Sprout and Captain.

“This is Otis!’ Sprout introduces me.

“Hello. I’m Otis.” I put out my hoof as I pull up to them.

“Nice to meet you, Otis!” Captain shakes my hoof with his paw, “I’m Captain!”

“Nice to meet you, too, Captain.” I say while smiling.

I never knew that Sprout had friends. He told me that all of his friends raped and hurt him. But then who’s this guy?

“I met Captain yesterday when I was down here! He is going to be my co-worker!” Sprout explains.

That makes a little more sense, but are they fully friends or just co-workers? Sprout seemed really excited to see Captain.

“Oh, okay. So you guys are friends?” I ask.

I don’t know why I want to know so bad. Why do I care so much?

“Of course we are! We had a blast yesterday and immediately became good friends!” Captain jumps in.

“I would say so!” Sprout says.

So they are friends? But they only just met yesterday. I’ve known Sprout longer. How come Sprout is friends with Captain and not me? I was super nice and helpful. I did everything to make him feel safe.

Dammit. I’m being a shitty person. I can’t act like this. I need to be mature.

“Oh, that’s awesome! I’m happy for you Sprout! Glad you found a friend!” I try to be more uplifting.

I shouldn’t be acting so jealous. I should just be happy for Sprout because he found someone he trusts.

Sprout smiles but also looks nervous or anxious.

Did I say it sarcastically? If I did, I didn’t mean to. I was trying to be genuine.

“So do you guys wanna go grab some breakfast down at the cafe?” Captain asks, excited.

“I am hungry, so sure!” Sprout replies, “How about you Otis?”

“Oh, yeah! I’ll come in a minute, I just wanna check out some shops first.” I say.

“Alright! We’ll see ya there!” Shouts Captain.

Then they both walk down the street toward the cafe. I don’t plan to go looking in shops, I just wanted an excuse to go smoke a cigarette.

I walk over to the entrance of the town and spot a boardwalk. I head over to it and pull out my pack of cigarettes. I snatched this pack from the closet at the motel. I didn’t want Sprout to think anything bad of me.

I know I shouldn’t be smoking, but it’s my coping mechanism. I’ve been smoking since I was 98. Plus, I can’t die from smoking. I’m immortal.

I shake the box and hit on my hoof. I peel off the plastic and throw the wrapper into the trash can next to me.

“Hey! I’m sitting here!” I hear a deep voice.

I glance over and see someone sitting in the trash can. He is filthy. He is covered in dirt and some unknown goop. There are flies swarming him.

“Why are you in the trash?” I ask, concerned.

“You tell me! I was just laying in my house and then my boyfriend suddenly ran away! Next thing I know is that I’m dancing around down the street fucking naked! Then I end up here! I’ve been here for 2 days!” He screams.

He’s pretty rude. I don’t know why he’s mad at me for him being here.

“Why did you start dancing?” I chuckle a little.

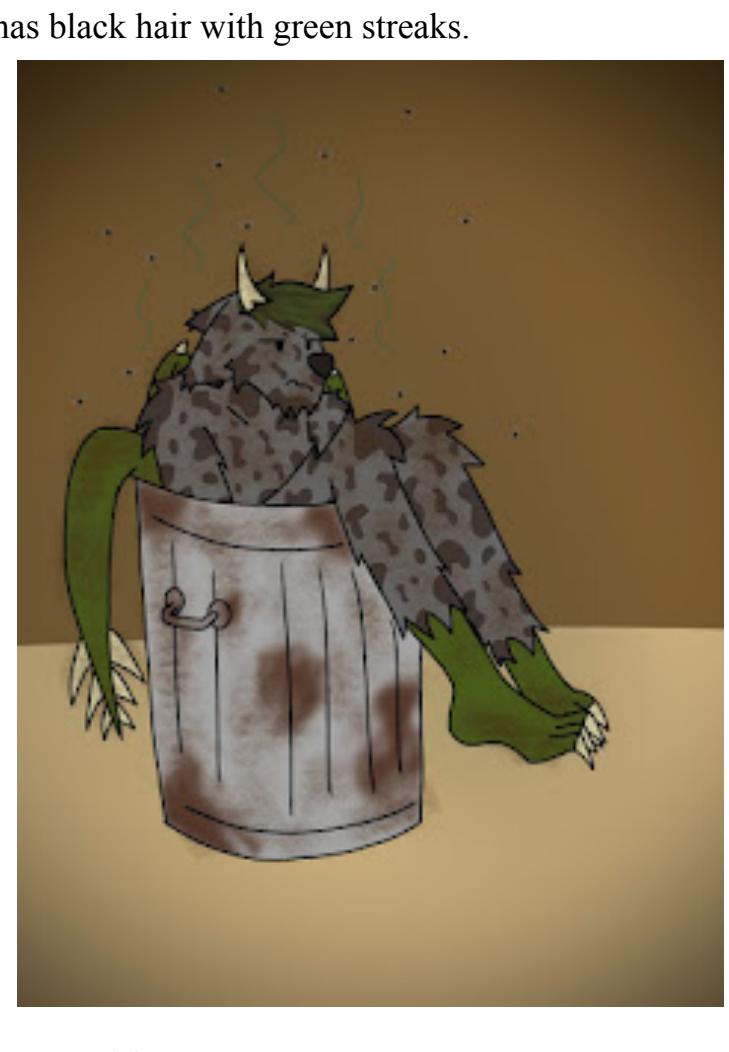
“I wasn’t doing it! It’s like I was a puppet and I couldn’t control what I was doing!” He exclaims.

A puppet? Being controlled?

I start to notice more details about his appearance. He has big green wings. They look similar to mine. He has big yellow horns. I also have horns. He has a big long tail that matches his wings. I have a long tail.

Why does he look similar to me?

His fur color is grey with dark grey spots. He has black hair with green streaks.



Hold on..

Venus mentioned a few days ago that her target was grey with spots and had big wings. She was saying something about him being hot or whatever.

Is this the same guy?

“Were you drunk at the time you were being controlled?” I ask.

“I had a few beers but I wasn’t dancing because I was drunk! I’m telling you that I was possessed or something!”

Venus said that he was drunk when she found him.

It’s the same guy. So that’s what happened to him.

“Want help out of there?” I chuckle.

“It’s not funny!” He shouts.

“Do you want help or not?”

“...Yes..”

I then put the pack of cigarettes back into my pocket to help him out. I step closer and tell him to grab onto my hooves. He grabs on and holds on tight. I tug and use my body weight to yank him out.

The trash can falls over and he flys out. Different pieces of trash fly out with him. He’s covered in dirt and not wearing anything. I’m personally not affected by this because I was unclothed for 210 years.

“Don’t look at me!” He demands.

“I wasn’t trying to.” I sigh.

He quickly grabs a dirty towel from the trash can and covers himself up.

“Want me to go buy you some clothes?” I ask.

“Sure.” He grumbles.

“Alright, stay here. I’ll be right back.”

I then use my wings to fly over to the top of a clothing shop. I don’t have any more money to shop, so I decide to turn on my invisibility before I sneak in.

I then activate my invisibility and fly down to the front of the entrance. Multiple people are shopping inside and it’s pretty crowded. I slip through the doorway, trying not to bump into anyone.

As I make my way in, I spot a grey t-shirt. I don’t think the guy will mind the color. I then fly up to the ceiling and hang upside down like a bat over the clothing rack. I use my tail to hang on to the ceiling boards and then reach down for the shirt.

I quickly snatch the clothing and tuck in under my shirt. I then fly back to the entrance of the store and make my way out. I land back on the roof and turn off my invisibility. I pull back out the shirt and fly over to the man.

“You were quick.” He says.

“Yeah, there weren’t very many people shopping.” I lie.

I reach out my hoof and hand him the shirt. He quickly grabs it, eager to put it on.

“Why is it so small?” He grumbles.

“The only one I could find.” I say, annoyed.

This guy is extremely rude. Even after I helped him out and got him a shirt.

What’s his problem?

I notice that he hasn’t put it on yet.

“Why aren’t you putting it on?” I ask.

“I’m filthy and I don’t want to get it dirty.” He says, frustrated.

I look around for something to clean him off. I can’t seem to find a hose or anything. Then I remember that we are standing on a boardwalk, right above a big lake. I turn to look behind him and see that it’s deep.

“What are you looking at?” He turns to look behind him.

“Nothing. Just found a way to clean you off.” I chuckle.

“What do you me-”

I quickly pounce and push onto his chest. I shove him over the railing and watch him fall into the water.

“Agh!!” He screams.

I hear a big splash and see the water droplets fly into the air and sparkle in the light of the sun. I can see a small rainbow for a slight second.

I step toward the edge of the railing to check on the guy. He is sitting in the water with his wings wrapped around him. He is shivering and shaking. I begin to laugh.

“Why would you do that?!” He exclaims.

“I already told you,” I laugh, “I found a way to clean you off!”

I can’t stop laughing at his face. He looks so pissed.

“You fucking bastard!” He shouts.

“Okay, bud, there’s no need for calling names.” I say.

“Just come help me out!” He demands.

“Just use your wings to fly up here.” I laugh.

“I can’t! I’m too cold!”

“God dammit.”

I climb up on the railing and use my wings to fly down. I then put down my bottom hoof for him to grab onto.

“Grab on, but don’t use your claws.” I say.

He then grabs hold and hangs on, his wings still wrapped around his body. I then fly up slowly and hover over the boardwalk. He lets go of my hoof and drops down.

“There you go.” I say as I land on the ground.

He shakes off the water and flaps his wings to blow off the rest.

“Are you gonna say anything?” I ask.

No response.

“You gotta say something after I helped you.” I say.

“You’re annoying.” He grumbles.

“Oh, yeah! Thank you my dear friend for saving my life from the ice cold waters of a great big sea!” I mimic.

“Alright, fine. Thanks..” He pauses.

“My name is Otis.” I mention.

“Thank you, Otis.” He mumbles.

“And your name?”

“Noah.”

“Nice to meet you, Noah.”

I then reach out my hoof to properly shake his paw, but he ignores me. I then give up on trying to be nice and just walk back to the edge of the railing. I reach back into my pocket and grab the pack of cigarettes.

“You smoke?” Noah asks., as he puts on the shirt.

“Yeah. I’m not proud of it, but it’s my body to destroy.” I say as I pull out a cigarette.

He walks over next to me. I lean over the railing with my arms bent and my elbows on the edge. I stare at my cigarette.

“Need a lighter?” Noah asks.

“Oh, yeah.” I say.

He reaches out and grabs my cigarette. He pulls it toward his mouth.

“Hey, that one is mine. I can just grab one for you.” I say before he puts it in his mouth.

“I’m not taking this one. Just wait.” He explains.

He then closes his eyes and takes a breath. I watch carefully. He then blows softly and a small flame comes out, lighting the cigarette perfectly.

“Here.” He hands back the cigarette.

“Oh, thanks.” I say, “That was pretty cool.”

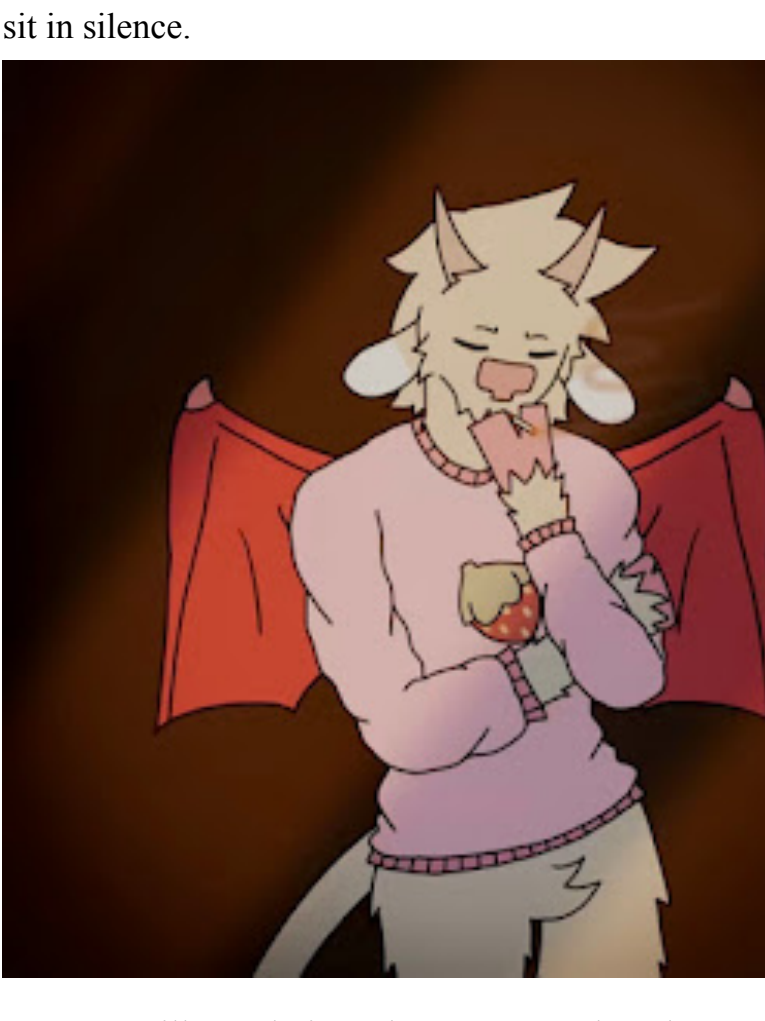
“Nothing much for a dragon.” He says.

“You’re a dragon?” I ask.

“Well, not a pure breed dragon. I’m a wolf and dragon hybrid. That’s why my flame is smaller than other dragons.” He explains.

“That makes sense.” I say as I hand him a cigarette from the pack.

He takes the cigarette and lights it for himself. I lean up and put my cigarette in my mouth. Then I take a puff. I then take a moment to myself and just sit in silence.



I’m still wondering why Venus was here last night. It doesn't make sense for her to come to the mortal realm on her day off.

Why would she come here?

She said she was here to stop by and say “hi,” but she’s not supposed to do that. It’s against demon rules. And she’s not one to break rules so casually after the last time she did. The boss was not happy the last time she broke a rule. She got into a lot of trouble.

She broke a very important rule. We aren’t allowed to do each other's tasks, especially if we are different types of demons. She tried flirting with a mortal on the job once. The boss had sent me to a certain target, but Venus wanted to tag along. I let her come because her target was a few blocks down.

But when we got there, she got overly excited and wanted to try my job. I tried to stop her and tell her that she can’t. But she was eager to try.

We were both dragged back to Hell by Satan and got in trouble. I didn’t get in that much trouble because I tried to stop her. But she was punished and got yelled at a lot. She can be sensitive around bigger powers, so she never broke a rule again.

I never really understood why we can’t do each other's tasks, but I don’t see the point in finding out. I just did what I was told.

But that doesn’t matter now. I am being held against my will because I didn’t finish my last task.

“Hey, what are you thinking about, Otis?” Noah interrupts my trail of thought.

“Oh, just thinking about life.” I say.

“Wanna talk about it?” He asks.

“Nah, not much to talk about. How about you? You mentioned a boyfriend earlier?”

“Oh, yeah. He was someone.” He says.

“What was he like?” I ask.

“He was shy. Like really shy. He was definitely traumatized. When I first met him, he was covered in dirt and gunk.”

“Reminds me of you.” I chuckle.

“Okay, bud.” He lets out a small laugh.

“Was he nice? Was he a good boyfriend?” I ask.

“He was. He would help me cook and help clean the apartment. But he was annoying at times.”

“What do you mean? How was he annoying?”

“I would ask him for simple things, but he would refuse for some reason. I would ask nicely, but he would always tell me ‘no’ and be rude about it.”

“No relationship is perfect.” I say.

“True, but I wish he wouldn’t have run away.” Noah says looking down.

“Why did he run away?” I ask.

“I don’t know. He was just freaking out in the bathroom one morning and then he ran out the door, screaming for someone to leave him alone. But I don't know who he was talking to. I was on the floor, a little drunk.” Noah explains.

“He sounds unstable. Maybe he had a lot of trauma going on and he was having a panic attack,” I say, “Maybe it’s good that you aren’t together anymore. He clearly wasn’t ready for a relationship.”

“Yeah..”

I suddenly remember that I left Sprout and Captain alone at the cafe. I was gone for way too long. I need to get back for breakfast. I quickly throw my cigarette into the water and stretch a bit.

“Want to come to breakfast with me and my friends? You probably haven’t eaten in a while.” I ask.

“I have nothing better to do, I may as well.” He says.

Narrator:

Both Noah and Otis walk down to the cafe where Sprout and Captain are. As they both walk, they start getting to know each other a bit. Otis doesn’t really *like* Noah but he is chill with him so far.

“Do you like coffee?” Noah asks.

“I’ve never really tried it.” I reply.

“Dude, you need to get a cup for me and you.” He chuckles.

I don’t really like the fact that he just invites me to buy him stuff. I mean, I would get him some food because he hasn’t eaten in a while and I like to be nice, but I hate it when others tell me to.

“Maybe another time, Noah.” I force a small chuckle.

As we pull up to the cafe, I can see through the window Captain standing with Sprout in line. I’m surprised that they are still in line after all that time.

“You said you have some friends here?” Noah asks.

“Yeah, they are inside about to order.” I say.

I know that me and Sprout aren’t technically friends, but I don’t know what else to call our relationship.

I open the door for Noah and then follow behind him. I stand beside him looking around. I notice that Sprout isn’t with Captain anymore. I then walk toward Captain to ask him where he went.

“Hey, Captain.” I say.

He turns around and says, “Oh, hi, Otis!”

“Where did Sprout go?” I ask.

“He just went to the bathroom real quick.” He replies.

I nod, understanding where he went. I walk back over to Noah, who is standing by the door.

"I'm gonna go grab a spot outside for us to eat. Wanna come with?" I ask.

"Sure. You can introduce me to your friends outside." He says.

"Alright."

I head outside with Noah following behind me. I find a table with two seats, so I go and grab two more to bring to the table. Then I take a seat.

Noah helps himself to the chair next to me. He leans back with his arms behind his head and his feet up on the table.

Disgusting.

This guy really has no manners. I might be a demon that lives in the filthiest of Hell, but this guy just needs to learn to be respectful and get some manners.

"Get your damn dragon toes off the table." I say with grit.

"Chill, Otis. I'm just relaxing. I was cramped up in that garbage can for 2 days, let me stretch a bit." He says with an ornery tone.

"Where the hell are your manners?"

"Probably dropped them in the trash can."

I roll my eyes.

"Just get your feet off the table." I sigh.

"Fine." He pouts.

He then removes his feet from the table. We sit in silence. I like the quiet. It's peaceful.

"God, I wish I had my phone right now." Noah blurts out, ruining the silence.

"Why can't you stop talking for one minute?" I grumble.

"Jeez, bro. I just want something to do." He pouts.

I don't reply. I want to try and end the conversation before it even starts. I close my eyes and cross my arms.

"So, do you have a girlfriend?" Noah asks.

"You can't just shut up, can you?" I say, frustrated.

I open my eyes again and sit up.

"I'll take that as a no." He whispers.

"Why does it matter to you?"

"Oh, I see! You're gay!" He chuckles.

"Can we move on from the topic of partners, please?" I ask, annoyed.

"I'm just curious. You seem good looking, so I thought you would have a special someone." He leans back and puts his feet back on the table.

"Thanks." I try to just keep the conversation to a minimum.

I hear the door open and see Captain walk out with some food. He notices Noah and looks confused. He then walks over to us and sets the food onto the table and takes a seat.

"Hey, Otis! Did you decide to invite another friend?" He asks cheerfully.

"Nah. I just found him in the trash and he was hungry. So I thought I would bring him here." I say.

Noah removes his feet from the table and jumps out of his chair.

"You're making it sound like I'm a hobo!" Noah exclaims.

I let out a small chuckle. I knew it was going to piss him off.

"Well it's nice to meet you.." Captain pauses.

"Noah." Noah says.

"Thank you! Nice to meet you, Noah! I'm Captain!"

"Nice to meet you, too."

I try to relax and block out their voices. I want a moment to just sit and think about nothing. Lately, everything has been stressing me out. I was supposed to relax over by the boardwalk, but Noah ruined that for me. I mean, he is a somewhat nice guy, but he is just randomly plain out rude and disgusting.

He just gives bad vibes for some reason. I remember he was talking about how his boyfriend was rude to him whenever he asked nicely for a favor. But from what his personality is, I think he probably wasn't so nice. He might be a big time liar, but it's none of my business anyway.

I then snapback to reality and see that Captain and Noah aren't talking anymore. Noah looks stuck up and Captain looks like he is feeling down. Captain was much more talkative and happy before. What happened?

"Sorry, I zoned out. What were yall talking about?" I ask, sitting up in my chair.

"Oh, nothing. I just was getting to know Noah a bit." Captain says.

I can tell that Noah probably said something hurtful to Captain. I'm really starting to not like this guy. He has been getting on my nerves.

I suddenly see Sprout walk out from the cafe holding some drinks. He is holding them close to him and walking slowly to make sure they don't fall and spill.

"Hey, Captain, I could only grab two drinks, I will run back in to grab yours." Sprout says.

Sprout walks over to the table, staring down at the drinks, watching them carefully. He sets down one cup in front of me and holds the other one.

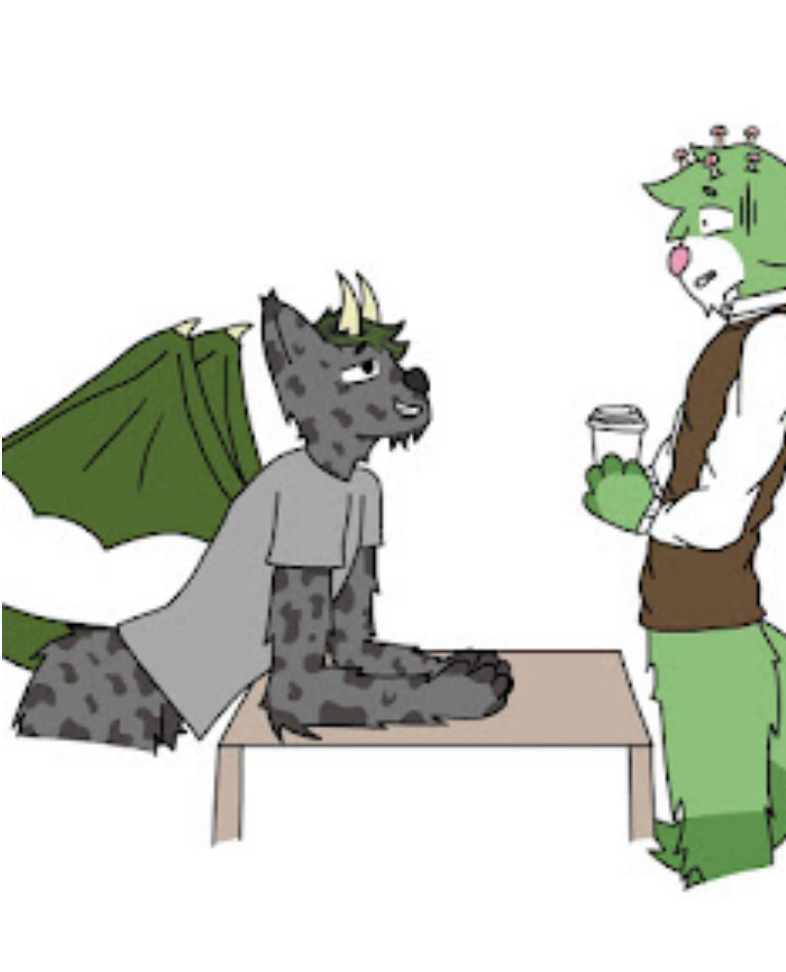
I notice that Noah is watching Sprout very intensely. I don't want him to make a rude comment to Sprout either, so I try to get up to tell Noah to leave.

As soon as I stand up, Noah starts talking to Sprout.

"There you are," Noah says with grit, "I finally found you."

Sprout then looks up and turns to Noah. His face fills with horror. His eyes widen and his pupils shrink. His paws start to shake and the drink starts to slip. His tail then lowers and tucks between his legs. His ears go back.

"Did you miss me, Sprout?" Noah asks, leaning forward toward Sprout.



Sprout quickly jumps back and drops the drink. The green liquid splashes everywhere and makes a huge mess. Captain stands up and grabs some napkins from the other table. Noah stands up and steps away from his chair.

Sprout slowly backs away, trembling with fear. He backs up into the wall.

What's happening?

Noah steps closer to Sprout. I notice the tension and Sprout is feeling scared. I decide to step in and try to calm down the situation. I run over to Noah and grab hold of him before he can get any closer.

"Hey, don't go toward him like that. He's clearly overwhelmed right now and needs some space." I explain to Noah.

"Let go of me! I just want to talk to him!" Noah exclaims.

He then starts tugging and trying to pull away from my grasp. I don't know what his intentions are and how he knows Sprout, but I don't want Noah getting any closer to Sprout.

"Noah, stop right now. Can't you see that he's scared?" I start to tighten my grip.

Sprout is still standing frozen up against the wall. Captain is cleaning up the mess with the napkins. Noah continues to tug and yell.

"Sprout! I just want to talk! Tell Otis to let go of me!" Noah shouts.

Sprout doesn't answer. He clearly needs me here to hold onto Noah.

"Noah! Stop! What are you doing?!" I start to lose my temper.

My hooves slip and Noah takes the chance to run toward Sprout. Sprout immediately collapses to the ground, not moving an inch. I quickly pounce onto Noah and hold him down on the ground.

"Let me go! I just want to talk!" Noah demands.

I then grab Noah's wings tightly and start to lift him up. I start flapping my own wings and lift him into the air, keeping him from reaching Sprout.

"Captain! Take Sprout away from here! Just get him somewhere quiet and peaceful!" I shout to Captain.

Captain nods and starts to help up Sprout. I quickly fly over to the boardwalk and hold Noah up in the air over the lake.

"What are you doing?!" I ask Noah.

"What am I doing?! What are you doing?!" He shouts.

"I want to know how you know Sprout and why you want to talk to him so badly!" I demand.

"Well you know that boyfriend I was talking about? That's him!" Noah shouts.

My eyes widen. I'm shocked to hear those words. I quickly fly down onto the boardwalk and put down Noah. I let go of his wings.

"Let me just talk to him! I have to say something to him!" Noah demands.

He tries to fly over to Sprout, but I immediately step on his tail to hold him down on the ground. He screams in pain.

"You said your boyfriend was crazy and he ran away for no reason," I say, "Sprout is not crazy!"

"I told you that he was in a random panic and talking to himself in the bathroom! Then he ran away, screaming for someone to leave him alone!" Noah explains.

I keep my hoof on his tail to keep him where he is. I need answers.

"You said that he was rude to you when you asked nicely for a favor, but Sprout would never do that! He is way too skittish and he has too much trauma to stand up to anyone!" I explain, "When I first met him he was terrified of me and didn't even try to get away from me! He just sat there and let me do whatever!"

"What did you do to him then?!"

"I didn't do anything because it's wrong and cruel! He was already mistaking me for someone else! He kept calling me 'Noa-'"

It hits me. Sprout kept calling me "Noah" when we first met. He was terrified. He would beg for me to not hurt him. Then when he started venting to me, he would tell me what this so-called, "Noah," did to him with his friends.

Why didn't I remember this earlier?

I literally brought his rapist to him. How could I not see that he was a horrible person at the start? How was I so blind to not see it? Noah was rude, hurtful, didn't respect boundaries, had weird stories about his boyfriend, and was so eager to talk to Sprout.

"He kept calling you what?!" Noah shouts.

"He kept calling me 'Noah.'" I lower my voice but keep it firm.

"Why would he call you by my name?!"

I flip him around and grab him by the collar of his shirt. I stare into his eyes.

"You tell me.." I grumble.

"Why would I know?" Noah mumbles.

"Because we look alike, he thought I was you, and he is terrified of you."

"Why would he be scared of me?"

I pull him closer to me and bite down on my teeth. I feel my heart racing and pounding. I can even express how upset I am. I'm more than upset, I'm furious.

"You fucking asshole." I grumble.

"What did you just call me?" Noah starts to bite down as well.

"I said that you're a fucking asshole!" I scream.

I immediately lift my other hoof into the air and swing at Noah. My hoof hits right under his eye.

"The fuck?!" Noah exclaims.

He then throws a punch into my snout, causing it to bleed immediately. I can't help but lose my self control and fully attack him. I throw him down to the ground and start beating the shit out of him. He screams in pain as his own blood splatters on his face.

"How could you do that to Sprout?! You hurt him! You made him scared of everyone!" I scream as I punch his face over and over again, "Then you proceed to lie to my face, saying that he's crazy and he ran away for no reason!"

Noah uses his claws to scratch at my body and face. He rolls out of the way and then stands up quickly. I'm too slow to react fast enough. He comes full speed at me with his claws out and slices my eye. I cry out from the stinging pain.

"I don't know why he ran away! How do you even know?! You just assume this for what reason?!" He exclaims.

I use my hoof to cover my eye.

"He ran away because of you! You raped him! You abused him! You used him for your own pleasure! Not a care in the world for him!" I scream.

I then use my wings and dart toward him. Noah tries to move out of the way, but slips on a puddle of water. He falls to the ground with a thud. He cries out in pain. I use the opportunity to grab him by the collar again and yank him close to my face.

Tears are falling from my eyes and blood is dripping from my nose. Noah's nose is bleeding, too. I can already see his eye starting to bruise and swell up.

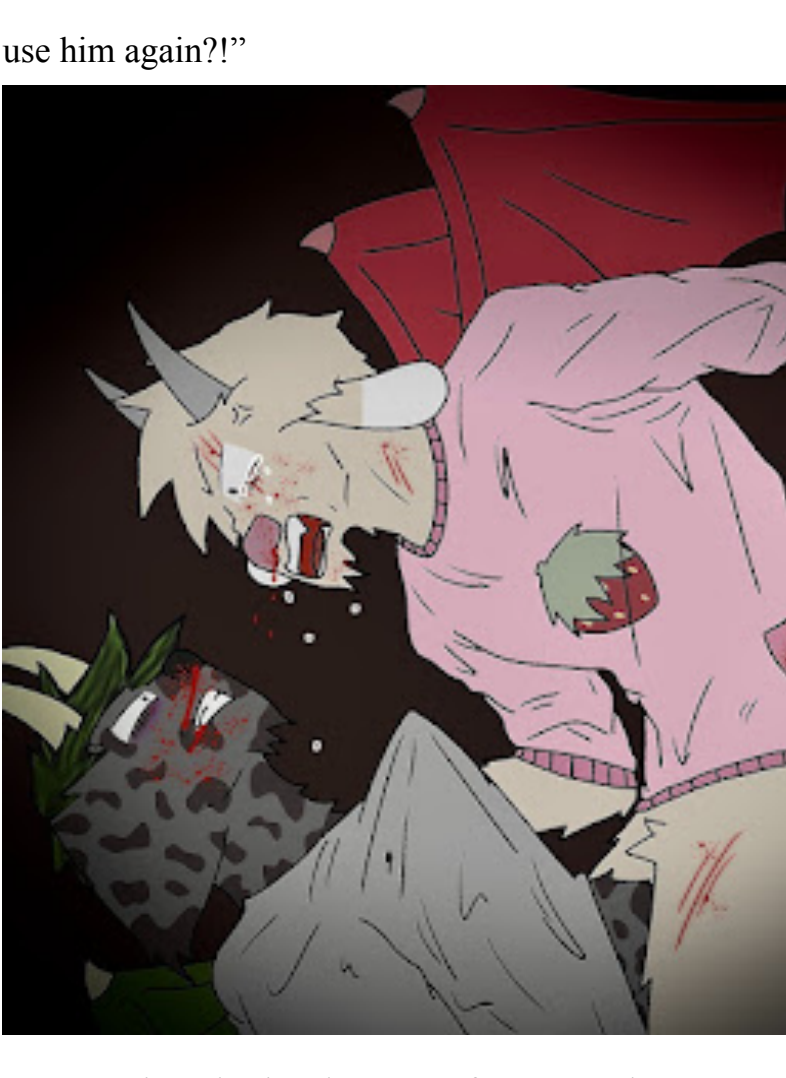
"How could you be so heartless?! You bastard!" I scream.

I continue to beat him with my hooves. He tries to talk, but each time I punch him in the mouth.

"You evil, bitch! You hurt him! You traumatized him! Do you know how he feels?!" I scream.

I can't help but take out all of my strength onto him.

"You keep saying that you just want to talk to him, but how do I know that you're not going to just use him again?!"



"He is so broken because of you! You have no idea what he's like now because of you! You made him obedient to everyone he meets! He doesn't know how to say 'no!' He doesn't know how to stand up for himself!" I continue to curse him out.

With each punch, I let out more anger and hatred. Each hit is harder than the last. Blood splatters across his face and my own tears and blood fall onto him.

"How could you do that to an innocent person?! What did he ever do to you?!" I scream.

As I beat him over and over again, I realize that I'm no better than him. I was the exact same way. I was selfish, cruel, disgusting. Noah has hurt Sprout, but I hurt hundreds of mortals. Why did I do it? Because I wanted to be number one. I wanted to be the master's favorite. He taught me that all that matters is to be the best.

Every word I scream to Noah, I realize that I'm only talking to myself. I hurt innocent mortals, I traumatized hundreds, I have no idea how they could feel, but I get mad at Noah for doing the same things I did.

I then stop punching Noah, realizing that I knocked him out. I got so frustrated at him because he was a horrible person. Or maybe I was taking my own self hatred out on him.

Not only do we look alike, but we act alike. How could I be so stupid? Maybe the reason why I hate Noah so much is because he reminds me of myself. He represents my biggest regret.

I slowly get off of him and step back. I wipe the blood off my face. My sleeve now has smeared blood stains. I stare at him, he's still breathing. I want to kill him, but I can't do that. I already beat the living Hell out of him.

I wish I could beat myself up. I wish I could kill myself.

I hate myself.

—--

Narrator:

After Otis finished beating up Noah. He went into the lake to rinse off. He didn't want to scare Sprout with all the blood. After he got cleaned up, he carried Noah to the town's care center.

—--

A New Friend (Sprout's POV)

I can't see much. Everything is a blur. All I can hear is some mumbling. I can't tell where I am. I reach out my paws and feel the ground.

Grass.

I thought I was at the cafe. I was with Captain, Otis, and- I can't even think about him. I was just handing out the drinks for Captain and Otis, but he just appeared out of nowhere.

Why was he there? How did he find me?

It doesn't make sense. He was just sitting at the table as if he were a part of the friend group. He was just sitting there like it was normal. Then, he just stares at me with those eyes. He got closer and closer to me. I couldn't help but freeze and go into a panic.

I can more muffled shouting. It sounds like multiple people yelling.

"Sprout!" I hear.

I can't tell who it is. All I know is that I feel like I can't move. My head is spinning around and my chest is pounding. I can feel my claws retracting back into my paws.

Why were they out?

I try to open up my eyes but can't. I can feel someone touching my shoulders. I want to move away because I don't know if it's Noah or not, but I can't move at all. I can't even nudge to the side.

"Sprout! Wake up!" The voice is becoming more clear to me.

"Sprout!" It's Captain.

I try to sit up, but can't seem to find the strength to do so.

"Otis! Help! He's not moving!" Captain shouts.

Where is Otis? Where is Noah?

I start to worry. What if they are together? What is Noah doing to Otis?

"I'm coming!" I can hear Otis yelling.

I hope that Noah isn't with him. I try to open my eyes once more. I manage to open them slightly enough to see Captain's face. He is leaning over me and holding a bottle of water.

"He's waking up!" He shouts.

I look over to my left and see Otis in the sky. He is using his wings to fly. He is headed toward me and Captain.

Where is Noah? Is he gone?

I slowly manage to pull myself up into a sitting position. I can feel my heart still pounding. I struggle to catch my breath.

"Hey, it's okay. You're okay, Sprout." Captain starts to calm down.

He starts to soften his voice and tries to comfort me. I feel myself about to fall backward again. I start to lean back, but Captain catches my head. He doesn't let me hit the ground.

"I got you, Sprout, don't worry." Captain whispers.

He lifts the water bottle up.

"Are you thirsty? You should have some water." He says.

His voice is soothing. It helps. I reach out for the water, but my arms are too tired. Captain notices my struggle. He lifts the bottle up to my mouth and tilts it enough to get some in my mouth. The refreshing water really does help.

As I drink the water, I can see Otis land near us. His tail flicks around and his big wings flap, blowing the small rocks out of the way.. He then hurries over and collapses to his knees.

“I’m so sorry Sprout!” He cries.

I can see tears rolling off his cheeks and dripping onto the grass. He has some red stains on his sleeve and some cuts all over his face and body.

“W-what happened to you?” I struggle to speak.

“Shh..” Captain tries to keep me from talking.

“It doesn’t matter. I’m just so sorry that I brought him with me. I completely forgot the name of the guy who..” Otis pauses.

He’s probably trying not to trigger me.

“I forgot the name of the guy you told me about,” He continues, “But I’m so sorry. If I would’ve known, I wouldn’t have brought him with me.”

I want to tell him that it’s not his fault. I wouldn’t expect him to remember his name anyways. I would’ve made the same mistake, too.

“Otis, don’t feel like it’s your fault. You didn’t know that he was a bad person.” Captain chimes in.

“But I should’ve known from the start. I noticed that he was being rude to me, but I still let him tag along. I don’t know what I was thinking.” He is still crying.

“It’s okay, Otis. It just slipped your mind.” Captain tries to assure him.

“I even noticed that you looked upset at the table, but I didn’t even try to tell Noah to go away. Even though I knew that he probably said something hurtful to you.”

“He just made a comment on my outfit and my tail. It’s not that big of a deal.”

The two of them keep going back and forth about it. I honestly just want to stop thinking about it. The more they talk about it, the more I think about the past.

“C-can you both stop talking about it, please?” I ask.

I hate asking people to stop what they're doing because it makes me feel selfish or rude.

“Sorry, Sprout. We will stop.” Captain says.

“Yeah. Sorry. I just want to let you know how sorry I am.” Otis says, wiping his tears with his stained sleeve.

I start to gain my strength back and pull myself up. I rub my eyes with my paws. I then look up at Otis, still on his knees.

“Why do you have scratches all over you? And why is there a red stain on your shirt?” I ask, worried.

“I don’t think you need to know. I just want to know if you’re okay.” Otis says.

I’m not hurt, but I feel overwhelmed and overstimulated. My head aches and I feel nauseated. I feel like I need to puke.

“Have you had enough to drink, Sprout?” Captain asks.

“Yeah. I think so.” I reply.

“Are you able to stand?” Otis asks.

“I can try.”

I then bend my knees and push on the ground with my paws. Captain stands up and helps me up. I am able to stand. That’s good.

“How come you were struggling to stand up?” Otis asks.

“He fainted on the way here. When I helped him up from the ground earlier, he wasn’t standing straight and he would wobble a lot. He said he was dizzy right before passing out.” Captain explains.

“Oh my god. That must’ve been scary.” Otis says, concerned.

“I don’t know why he fainted though.” Captain says.

“Well, from what I can tell, he doesn’t drink that much water or has enough food to eat. Then add the sudden anxiety and panic attack, that could lead to fainting.” Otis explains.

I can’t stop looking at Otis. His face is covered in scars and cuts. His clothes are covered in blood stains. Assuming that it is blood.

What did he do? What happened?

The cuts are deep. Not only are they deep, but they look irritated. There is some redness around the cuts. His eye looks the most damaged.

“Did Noah do that to you?” I ask, stepping closer and pointing at his eye.

“Oh, umm.. yeah.” Otis covers his face with his hoof.

“Did you get into a fight with Noah?” Captain asks Otis.

Otis removes his hoof from his face and then looks at it. He then looks back up at Captain.

“Yeah. I kinda started it. When I realized who he was and what he did to Sprout, I just lost my temper and I couldn’t help but punch him.” Otis says.

He sounds like he’s ashamed. He’s not proud of his actions. I don’t think fighting was the right answer, but at the same time I’m kinda glad he did that for me. No one has ever stood up for me before. I never even stood up for myself. I was too scared to fight for myself. I was scared I would get hurt.

“Otis, thank you for doing that for me.” I thank him.

“Don’t thank me. I only hurt him out of anger and hatred.” He says.

“But you did it for me. You knew that he probably deserved it. So I want to thank you for that.” I assure him.

“Just say you’re welcome, Otis.” Captain chimes in.

“Alright. You’re welcome, Sprout.” Otis says.

I smile. I want to hug him to show my appreciation but I don’t think I’m ready for physical touch yet. I don’t know how else to show appreciation without breaking my own boundaries.

“Hey, look! There’s a playground over there!” Captain points over behind me.

I turn around to see a playground with a few kids playing on it. There is a slide, monkey bars, seesaw, and some other stuff.

“That looks like fun!” Captain exclaims, “And look! There’s a ball!”

Captain then darts over to the ball and kicks it. He immediately chases after the ball on four legs. He looks like he is having a blast.

I look over to Otis and he is just standing there. He watches Captain play with the ball.

“Do you want to go to the park?” I ask.

“I’ve never been to one before, but sure!” He says.

“I haven’t been to one either. I actually don’t know how to use it.” I say.

He then walks toward the park, flicking his tail around. I decide to tag along and follow him. I jog up to him and walk by his side.

“I’ve never really used one as a kid. I know how to use it, but I never was allowed to play on one.” Otis explains.

“It was pretty similar for me. I wasn’t allowed either. But I never even got to see people use one, I just would see one every so often when my dad took me to the gas station to grab his beer.” I explain.

“Do you want to learn how to use one? We can go together!” Otis offers.

“Oh, okay! Sure!” I get excited.

I’ve never gotten to play as a kid. I would sometimes use blades of grass and some string as toys. I would grab whatever I could find to keep me busy. But my dad would take them away from me when he found them.

Me and Otis walk to the playground together, side by side. Captain is still playing with the ball.

“What do you want to do first?” Otis asks.

I look around for something to try. I’ve heard about slides before. Apparently, they go fast. I would also like to try swings. I heard that you can get really high up when on them.

“How about the swings?” I ask.

“Sure!” Otis walks over to the swings.

I follow him. The swing is a piece of plastic with some metal chains attached to the pipes that dig into the ground. Otis grabs hold of one swing and sits in it. I copy him.

“Do you know how to get momentum?” Otis asks.

“Momentum?” I’m confused.

“Just swing yourself back and forth. Then the swing will start taking control with momentum.” He explains.

He uses his legs to push off the ground and then tucks them in and back out. He moves his legs back and forth along with his body leaning forward and back.

I stretch out my legs and push off the ground. I manage to get the swing to go up and down like Otis.

“Hey! I’m doing it!” I exclaim.

“Nice! Now use your legs to keep it going!” Otis explains.

I try to copy what Otis did, but the swing slows down and comes to a stop. I try again, but fail.

“Want me to help you out?” Otis asks.

“That would be great!” I get excited.

He walks behind me and grabs hold of the swing chains.

“Are you okay with this?” He asks.

He’s probably worried about scaring me. I’m glad he cares enough to check on me.

“Yeah! But what are you going to do?” I ask.

“Just hold on tight!” Otis chuckles.

He tightens his grip on the chains and then pulls. I get higher as I go backwards. Then suddenly, Otis pushes on the swing and lets go. I fly forward on the swing. The wind blows in my fur. This feeling is so magical. I feel so free and happy.

I gasp out of surprise and excitement. It feels like I’m flying.

“Woooo!!!” I exclaim.

“How is it?” Otis asks.

“I feel like I’m flying! This is amazing!” I exclaim.

How come I’ve never experienced this before? Why would my parents keep me from doing this?

I wish I would have run away sooner. I would’ve been able to experience all this fun stuff. I’m so glad I did run away. I got to try coffee and matcha. I got to sleep in an actual bed. I got to make friends. I get to experience life to its fullest.

“Want to go higher?” Otis asks.

“Yes!” I scream.

Otis slows down the swing and pulls it again, but this time, he pulls it higher. I look behind me and see that Otis is using his wings to get me higher. I look forward again and grab on tightly.

“Ready?” Otis asks.

“Yes!”

He lets go of the swing and I fall fast. The wind is stronger this time and my stomach feels funny. It feels like it’s dancing around. It tickles.

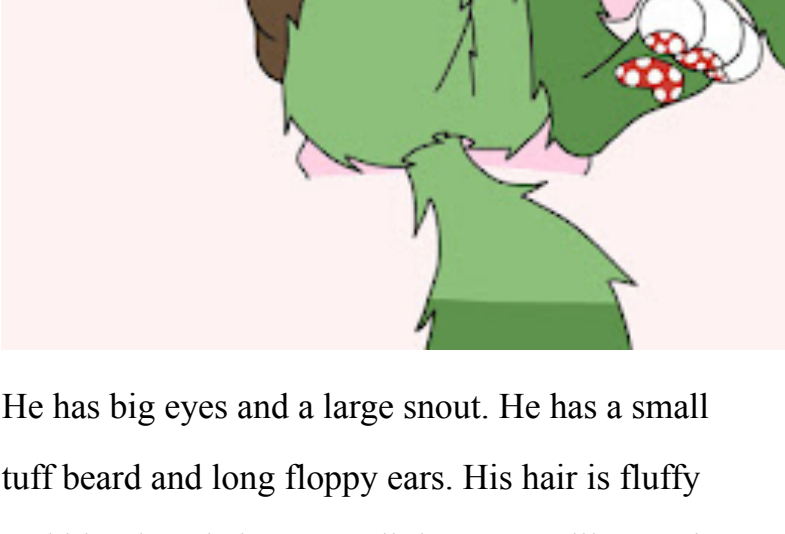
I swing forward to the highest point. I feel like I’m floating.

This is magic!

I then start to lose my grip on the chains. My paws start to slip and I start to lean backwards. I can feel myself starting to fall. I start to panic and have a hard time catching my breath.

My bottom slips from the seat and I fall out. I fall through the air. I close my eyes and try to prepare myself for the ground, but I immediately stop falling.

I can feel someone holding me. I open my eyes and see Otis. He caught me before I hit the ground. He used his wings to fly over and catch me mid air. I look up at him, starting to notice his facial features.



He has big eyes and a large snout. He has a small tuff beard and long floppy ears. His hair is fluffy and blonde. His horns are light grey, unlike Noah’s. I didn’t think much about his appearance on his own. I always compared him to Noah.

What is Otis anyways?

Compared to Noah, he’s actually quite handsome. I stare into his eyes and start getting a tingly feeling. My stomach feels like it’s squirming around. My heart starts racing a bit. My chest feels like it’s burning from the inside.

Am I getting sick?

Otis then lands on the ground and gently sets me down on the grass. He makes sure that I don’t sit on my tail by accident.

“Are you okay? Are you hurt at all?” Otis asks, concerned.

“I’m okay. I was just a bit scared for a second.” I say.

“You sure? No scrapes or anything?”

“Yeah, I’m okay. Thanks to you.”

He looks so worried. He really cares about me. He got me a motel room the day we met, he fought Noah for me, and he saved me from falling. He’s so nice and caring.

Honestly, I think Captain and Otis are my best friends. In fact, my only friends. But can I be friends with Otis? Do I have to ask first? I want to make sure that he’s okay with being friends.

I start to pick myself up off the ground and stand up. Otis is still by my side.

“Hey, I have a question.” I say.

“What is it?” Otis asks.

“Well, you are really caring, fun, and sweet. I love hanging out with you, but I was wondering, are we friends?” I ask.

He looks surprised. Not necessarily in a bad way. He scratches the back of his head with his hoof.

“Well, do you want to be friends?” He asks.

“Um.. Yeah!” I say.

“Then yes! I really wanted to be your friend, but I didn’t know how to ask.” He chuckles.

I laugh with him.

“Hey! What are you two giggling about?” Captain runs over to us with the ball in his arms.

“Oh, nothing. Just that we are friends now.” Otis explains.

“Oh my god! Yes! We are a friend group now!” Captain exclaims.

We all laugh with each other and then decide to play some more at the park. Captain wants to teach me how to play fetch.

“Okay, so Otis will throw the ball and then you will run after it and bring it back!” Captain explains.

“Oh, okay!” I am excited.

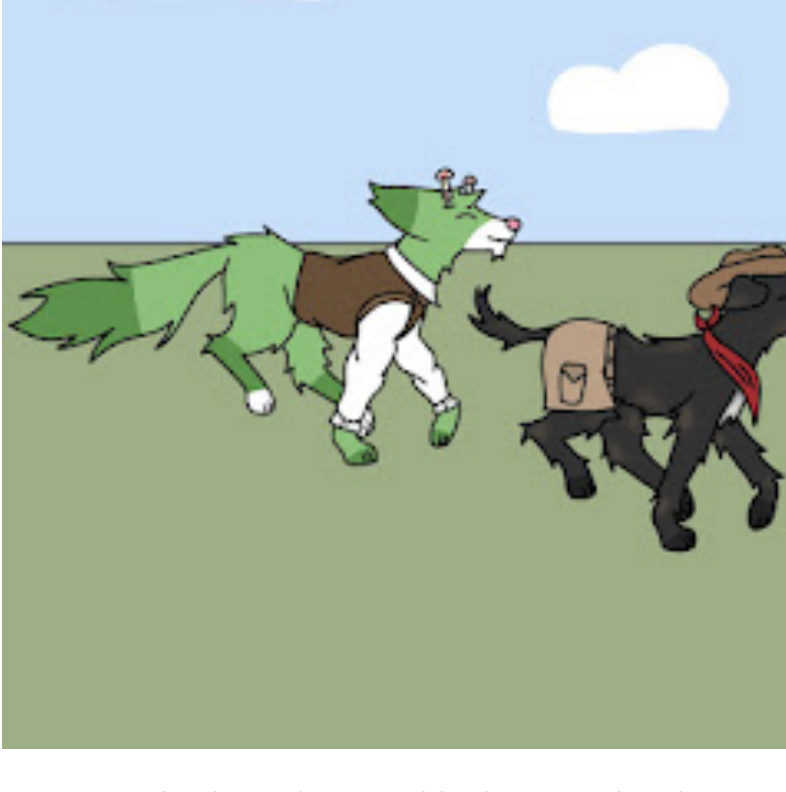
Captain hands the ball to Otis and gets ready on the ground. He is standing on all fours, getting ready to run. I copy him.

“Ready?” Otis asks.

“Yes!” Captain and I shout.

Otis lifts his arm and swings. Captain immediately darts across the field. I follow him. We are running fast, the wind blowing in our faces. I stand behind him and see his floppy ears move in the wind. His tail is wagging back and forth. I look back at my own tail and see that it’s wagging as well.

I’m having so much fun!



Captain slows down and looks around. I slow down, too.

“Wait. Where’s the ball?” Captain asks.

I start looking around for it. I stand up straight on my back paws. I can’t spot the ball. It was bright yellow. How can I miss it?

“Did you find it?” Captain asks, standing up.

“No, did we lose it?” I ask.

I look back over Otis. He has his hooves behind his back. I run over to him.

“How far did you throw the ball?” I ask.

“I didn’t throw it that far.” He replies.

I look back over at Captain. He’s still searching. I see him get back down on all fours. He starts sniffing the ground.

“What’s he doing? Does the ground smell good?” I ask Otis.

“He’s searching for the ball. Dogs have a good sense of smell.” Otis explains.

I never knew that. I’m a dog. I don’t know what breed I am though. I get down on the ground and start sniffing around.

“You’ve never done that before?” Otis asks.

“I never knew I could. I was never taught much. I learned to do basically everything from watching TV.” I explain.

I look up from the ground and see Captain getting closer to Otis and I. He is still on all fours, sniffing the ground. I then choose to stand up.

“I can smell it! Where is it?” Captain shouts.

“How can you smell something like a ball? I tried but I couldn’t smell anything different.” I ask.

“I don’t know. Maybe your sense of smell isn’t as strong as mine.” Captain says.

Captain gets closer and closer to Otis. Otis backs up, his hooves still behind his back. Captain goes behind Otis. Otis turns around. I look down at Otis’ hooves and spot the yellow ball.

“There it is!” I exclaim.

“Where?! I can smell it but I can’t see it!” Captain jumps up from the ground.

“Otis has it!” I start laughing.

“Dammit! You got me!” Otis starts laughing, too.

Otis then gives the ball to Captain. Captain drops it on the ground.

“How dare you! C’mere!” Captain then pounces onto Otis.

They both fall to the ground. They wrestle around, laughing. Otis manages to get away from Captain. I choose to join them.

“Ha Ha! You can’t touch me!” Otis shouts.

I use this chance to leap onto Otis. I tackle him down and then we roll down the small hill. I grab hold of him and wrap my arms around his torso. He grabs hold of me and wraps his wings around me. He uses his hooves to hold the back of my head. He pulls me close to him as we tumble down the hill.

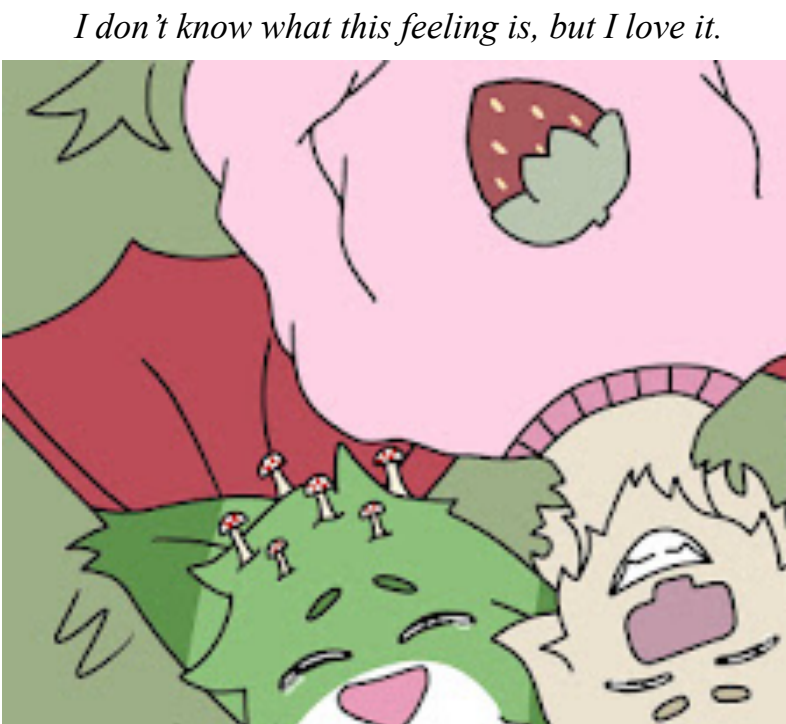
We come to a stop at the bottom and let go of one another. We fall backward into the grass and burst out laughing. I can feel tears coming to my eyes. I start crying with joy and laughter. I look over at Otis. He’s laughing so hard he is crying as well.

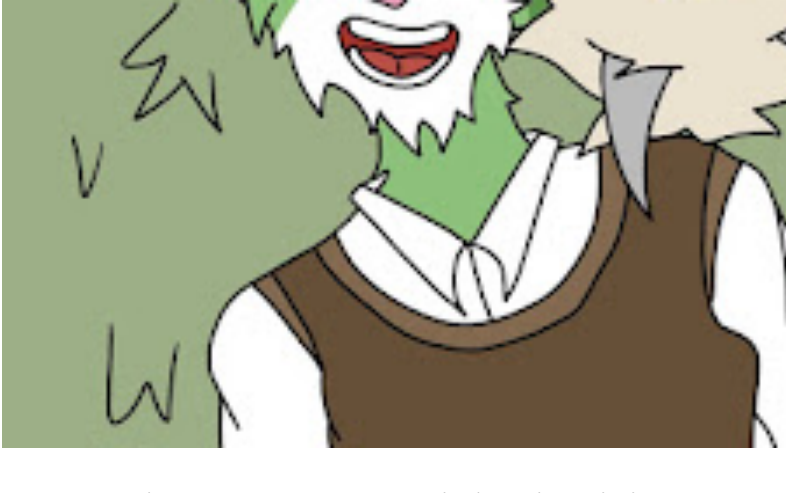
“Why would you jump onto me like that?!” Otis can’t stop laughing.

“I won’t let you take the victory!” I laugh.

We lay in the grass, facing up into the sky. The grass is soft, yet prickly. The bright sun beams warm up my fur. I feel toasty and warm. I close my eyes to avoid the sunlight. I can feel a small cool breeze running through my fur. The mixture of good weather and a friend by my side feels.. amazing. I haven’t ever laughed so hard in my life. I’ve never had this much fun.

I don’t know what this feeling is, but I love it.





“Dude, you’re crazy!” Otis laughs, sitting up.

“I’m crazy? You didn’t throw the ball like you were supposed to!” I giggle, sitting up as well.

“I thought it would be funny!”

“It was! But also mean!”

I look toward the top of the hill and see Captain at the top with the ball.

“Come down here, Captain!” Otis exclaims.

Captain throws down the ball and then sits down. He takes off his hat and hugs it tightly against his chest.

What is he doing? Is he okay?

Captain then lies down on his side.

“Watch out! I’m coming down!” He shouts.

He then starts rolling down the hill. He looks so funny and goofy. It’s hilarious. He begins to pick up speed as he makes his way down.

“Oh, no!” Otis shouts, “Get out of the way!”

Otis then jumps onto me, pushing me out of the way. We tumble to the side before Captain could crash into us. Captain comes rolling in and lands on his back, laughing really hard. I close my eyes from the impact of Otis pushing on me.

“Are you okay?” Otis asks.

“Yeah, I’m fi-” I open my eyes.

I see Otis looking down at me. He’s on top of me. Each of his hooves are on one side of me. His tail is flicking around and his wings are open. He is on his knees, leaning over me.

What is this?

I start feeling queasy and uneasy. I felt this earlier when Otis caught me from the swing. My stomach feels like it’s dancing around. My chest feels like it’s going to burst. My face feels warm. I feel my whole body getting hotter.

Is it the sun making me hot?

I see Otis staring down at me with a smile. His eyes are big and wide. His hair is flowing in the wind. He looks so..cool? I can’t explain it. He just looks different than before. He looks the same, but what’s different.

Why am I noticing the smallest details of his face and body now?

“Sprout? Are you okay?” Otis asks again.

“Oh, uh, yeah!” I’m fine!” I panic.

“Are you sure? You look red. Are you feeling sick?” Captain chimes in.

Captain is standing next to Otis with the ball in his paw, looking down at me.

“I feel a little different. My stomach feels kinda funny and my head feels warm.” I explain.

I look back over at Otis, still pinning me down. He looks back down at me and his eyes widen. His face starts turning red, too. He quickly tumbles off of me. I sit up.

“Sorry, Sprout, I didn’t notice that was holding you down.” He apologizes.

“I-it’s alright.” I say.

I see Captain looking up at the sky.

“Looks like it’s afternoon now. Should we all head home?” He asks.

“That’s probably a good idea. Sprout might be sick, so he should get some rest.” Otis says.

I stand up from the ground. Otis makes sure that I can walk.

“Alright, I’m gonna head to my place. You two have a good day!” Captain says goodbye.

“Bye!” Otis and I shout.

Narrator:
Otis and Sprout end up going to dinner at a restaurant. After eating, they head back to the motel. Technically, they aren’t supposed to be there because they didn’t pay for another night, but the employees don’t care nor pay attention.

Going back (Otis’ POV)

I am standing in the bathroom, looking into the mirror. I feel so tired. Today was a lot of fun for me. I got to bond with Sprout and meet his friend, Captain. I honestly don't know why I was so jealous of Captain. I guess I just wanted to be friends with Sprout and I was a bit annoyed that Captain got to be friends with him first.

I’m so stupid.

I don’t understand why I feel like this. I should just think positively. I had fun today and that’s all that matters. I got to hang out with Sprout, I got to do something that isn’t my assigned job, and I got to beat the absolute shit out of Noah. That was worth it.

I start to take off my sweater and fold it onto the counter by the sink. I stretch out my wings and flick my tail. I walk over to the shower and turn the knob. The water comes spewing out fast. The water sputters on the shower tiles, making a pitter-patter sound. The shower head starts squealing and whistling.

I reach out my hoof to feel the water. It’s hot, the way I like it. I step into the shower and start cleaning myself. I can’t seem to find any conditioner or shampoo. So I just scrub my head and body with my hooves with only water.

I turn to face the wall. The water splashes onto my wings and back. I lightly flap my wings to make sure water gets to every spot. I use my tail to scrub some dirt off my wings.

When I was playing around in the grass, I got pretty dirty. I got some dirt and grass all over me. I turn back to face the shower head. I look down at my legs and see that my knees have some grass stains. I start to wash off the green with my tail. It can be useful to have a long tail.

I start to think back to today at the park. I had so much fun with Sprout. I got to see him experience fun for the first time. I taught him how to use the swings. Even though he fell out of the swing, I caught him before he could hit the ground. I tried to avoid eye contact with him. I know that physical touch is my love language and when I grabbed onto Sprout, I felt a little flustered.

If I made eye contact with him, I would’ve started blushing. I didn’t want to make Sprout uncomfortable, so I avoided looking directly at him. I honestly don’t like that I feel this way. I feel horrible for wanting him at all. I wish I didn’t think of him in such a way.

Shit.

I suddenly remember when I tackled him. I only wanted to move him out of the way so he doesn’t get hurt. If I didn’t move him, Captain would have crashed into him.

But why did I jump onto him like that?

I could’ve just pushed him instead of throwing myself onto him. Although, if I just pushed him, that would’ve seemed rude and I could’ve hurt him. I wanted to make sure he didn’t get hurt, so I used my whole body to make sure he didn’t. I used my wings to wrap around him, to keep his head from hitting the ground.

But why didn’t I get up immediately?

I landed right on top of him, pinning him down. He must’ve been so scared. I probably triggered some trauma from Noah. I feel horrible.

I didn’t know how to react at that moment. Everything happened so fast. I didn’t even realize what I was doing until later.

I throw my hoof at the wall and lean up against it. I’m so frustrated with myself.

Dumbass. Dumbass. Dumbass.

“Hey, Otis?” I hear Sprout at the bathroom door.

“Yeah?” I shout so he can hear me.

“I’m gonna go to bed. Are you gonna stay here again or go home?” He asks.

I reach out for the knob and turn off the shower. I quickly jump out and use my wings to dry off. I grab my sweater and start to slip it on as I open the door.

“I think I might head home tomorrow morning.” I say.

“Okay! I was actually kinda hoping you would stay here because I honestly don’t feel safe here by myself.” He explains.

“Oh, okay! Do you want me to sleep on the floor again?” I ask.

I immediately regret asking him that. It sounds like I’m implying that I want to sleep in his bed with him. Probably made him really uncomfortable.

“Are you comfortable on the floor?” He asks, worried.

“I mean.. it’s not the best, but I can go one more night on the floor.”

“Are you sure? You can take a turn on the bed.” He offers.

“No. No. I would feel bad. You have the bed.” I say.

Sprout looks over at the bed and then back at me.

“How about I put a pillow between us and we can share the bed?” He asks.

I’m honestly surprised he came up with that on his own. I wouldn’t expect him to be comfortable with it. He’s gone through so much trauma.

“If you’re comfortable with it.” I say.

“Yeah! We are friends now! I trust you enough.”

His words struck me like a lightning bolt. I don’t know how to explain how I feel. I’m just so honored that he trusts me enough. I wouldn’t expect him to become so trustworthy so fast. Plus, he said that we are friends. My heart wants to dance around and celebrate.

I need to calm down.

I feel so happy and thankful that he thinks of me as a good person. I don’t even think of myself as a good person. I’m horrible, I’m cruel, I’m.. disgusting.

“I’ll put the pillow in the middle of the bed and you can pick what side you want to sleep on.” Sprout says.

“Okay. Sounds good!”

Sprout then grabs one of the three pillows and places it in the middle of the bed. I choose to sleep on the side closest to the door. Sprout climbs into the bed. I do the same. We pull over the covers and tell each other goodnight.

“Good night, Otis.” Sprout smiles.

“Sleep well, Sprout.” I smile back.

Sprout then turns over to face the wall and goes to sleep. I turn as well, but can’t fall asleep. I close my eyes and try to sleep but I can’t.

Just sleep.

I usually go to bed instantly, but for some reason I can’t. My mind keeps playing images in my mind. It’s like a movie. I can see Sprout lying down on the bed. He looks..scared. I can see myself standing in front of him. I’m glowing. I see myself starting to get closer to Sprout. He looks like he’s going to cry.

What is this?

I see myself starting to climb on top of him, pinning him down. He tries to move away, but I trap him. I use my hooves to push down on his paws. He squirms around, screaming for me to let go.

Stop it! Why am I seeing this?!

“Do you like the little trailer I made for you, Otis?” I hear a deep voice.

Fuck!

I immediately sit up and try to climb out of the bed. I tumble over and fall out. My head hits the floor, hard. I scramble to stand up.

“What do you want?” I whisper.

“I’ve let you go on for a long time without doing your task.” The boss says.

“Just leave him alone. I will work for you in Hell, but I want nothing to do with mortals.” I whisper aggressively.

“But I already decided what you’re going to do for me.” He chuckles.

I quickly run for the door, but I trip on something and face plant into the floor with a loud thud. I try to get up, but I can’t. I can’t move my body. I try to look around but I can’t see anything at all. Only darkness.

“Can’t get up?” Satan chuckles.

“Let me up! I don’t want to hurt Sprout!” I whisper aggressively.

“Let’s sit and watch the next preview together.”

I then start to see more images and pictures. It’s so horrifying and scary.

“Welcome to your mind! You have some control here, but I can control what you can see.” He explains.

“I don’t care about where I am! I just want you to leave Sprout alone!”

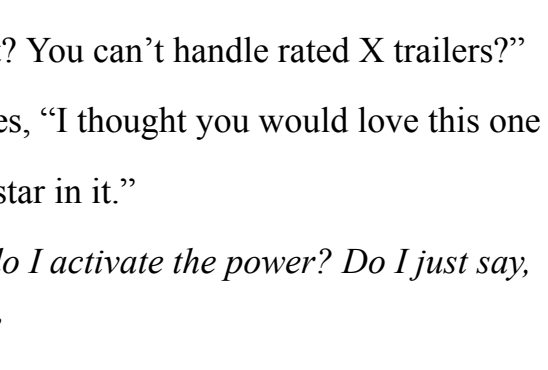
“Why would I do that? Sprout is just a useless mortal.”

“You have no idea what Sprout has gone through! I can’t do that to him again!”

“Why not? He should be used to it by now.” He chuckles.

I can’t believe this. I have been doing what this guy says for hundreds of years, but now is when I realize that he is just a manipulative and evil creature. How sick can this guy be?

“He shouldn’t have to be used to it! It shouldn’t have ever happened in the first place!” I scream.



“Hush now. You wouldn’t want to wake up Sprout.” He says in a condescending tone.

I need to get out of here. I need to leave the motel, but I can’t move. I can only speak right now.

Wait! My new power!

I can use the new power that Satan gave me. I can just teleport to Hell right now on command.

“What? You can’t handle rated X trailers?” Satan chuckles, “I thought you would love this one because you star in it.”

How do I activate the power? Do I just say, “go to hell?”

I try not to think about it too much and try to just figure it out. I want to get out of here as fast as I can. I then shout out some words that could possibly trigger the power.

“Take me to Hell!” Nothing happens.

“Teleport!” Nothing.

“What are you doing, Otis?” He laughs, “You look so silly and helpless.”

What else could it be? I don’t know much that would work. Do I have to move my body a certain way to activate it?

“Master the almighty!” A familiar voice shouts.

Venus?!

I immediately shout out the same phrase.

“Master the almighty!” I scream.

I am then slowly lifted up into the air. I am able to open my eyes. I see pink spirals spinning around me as I levitate into the air. I turn around to check on Sprout. He’s still asleep and safe.

I then turn over the other side and see Venus standing there. She looks scared, but also…guilty?

What is she doing here again?

I then see her change into an orb and then disappear.

“Good bye, Sprout.” I whisper.

Narrator:
Otis teleports back into hell. Venus ends up going back as well. Sprout stays fast asleep on the bed, safe and sound. Otis goes through a hard time with Satan because he’s still doing everything he can to stop him from hurting Sprout.

“I said I will do anything that isn’t hurting mortals!” I scream.

“I am your boss! Your master! The devil! Satan! I have full power over you!” He roars.

I stand in front of him, standing tall and confident, even though I’m actually terrified.

“More like a sour puss.” I chuckle.

“What did you call me?!” He asks with a temper.

“Sour puss. Get it? Because you’re a lemon and a pussy!” I laugh.

“Me? A pussy?! I am not scared of anything! I have full power over you!”

I roll my eyes. This guy pisses me off to an extreme level. I want to just beat the shit out of him, but I know that he could easily just stop me from doing so. I may as well offend him with my stupid jokes and insults.

I look over to my side and see Venus standing up against the wall. She looks scared, but guilty.

Why is she so guilty?

“Look at me when I’m talking to you, Otis!” Satan roars.

“You know? I’m gonna call you ‘Sour Puss’ from now on.” I chuckle.

I want to piss him off enough for him to kill me. If he kills me, I won’t have to serve him anymore.

“You bastard!” He then stands up tall.

He makes me unable to talk. I can’t say anything else. I really want to keep going with it. He slams my face down into the ground. I want to scream out in pain.

“Venus, come here.” He demands, signaling her to come over.

“Yes, sir.” She then walks over with her paws behind her back.

I look up and see her standing next to Sour Puss. I notice that she is trembling. She’s really scared.

“Venus, would you be a dear and make me happy by taking Otis to his room?” He asks her.

She looks so sad, but obeys his orders.

“Yes, sir.” She says.

She comes behind me and grabs onto my shoulders. I try to move, but Sour Puss has already taken my will to move. Venus then drags me to the wall and then starts to float up, carrying me. Though she doesn’t have wings, she can still levitate.

Wait. Why is she taking me this way? My room is downstairs.

As we fly up to the next floor, I watch Sour Puss get smaller and smaller. I know he’s not actually shrinking, but only becoming distant.

Venus lands up top and drags me by the tail. As she drags me, I can see all the demons stopping to look at me. I can hear whispers, murmurs, and laughs. Some are flying above and pointing at me. Others stand around and stare. Others continue to follow us.

“Isn’t that Otis?”

“The number 4 demon?”

“Yeah I think he got in trouble with the boss because he refused to do his task.”

“Why did he refuse? If I were a succubus, I would gladly do my task.”

I hear many voices saying all these things about me. They are asking questions, they are surprised, disappointed, shocked. Some laugh and make jokes.

If they knew what I knew, they wouldn’t be so quick to judge and mock me. They would have so many mixed feelings, like I do. After I found out what I was doing my whole life, I wanted to die. I do want to die. I have so many regrets.

If only I was a mortal, I could commit suiside and then let Sprout live life without me ruining it. But even if I did, Sour Puss could just hire a different demon to do the task.

Wait!

An idea comes into my mind. I need to let all the demons know what we are actually doing. They need to understand that what we are doing isn’t okay. I could try and convince them to turn against the boss. If no demon listens to the devil, then he has no army. He can't possess all of us.

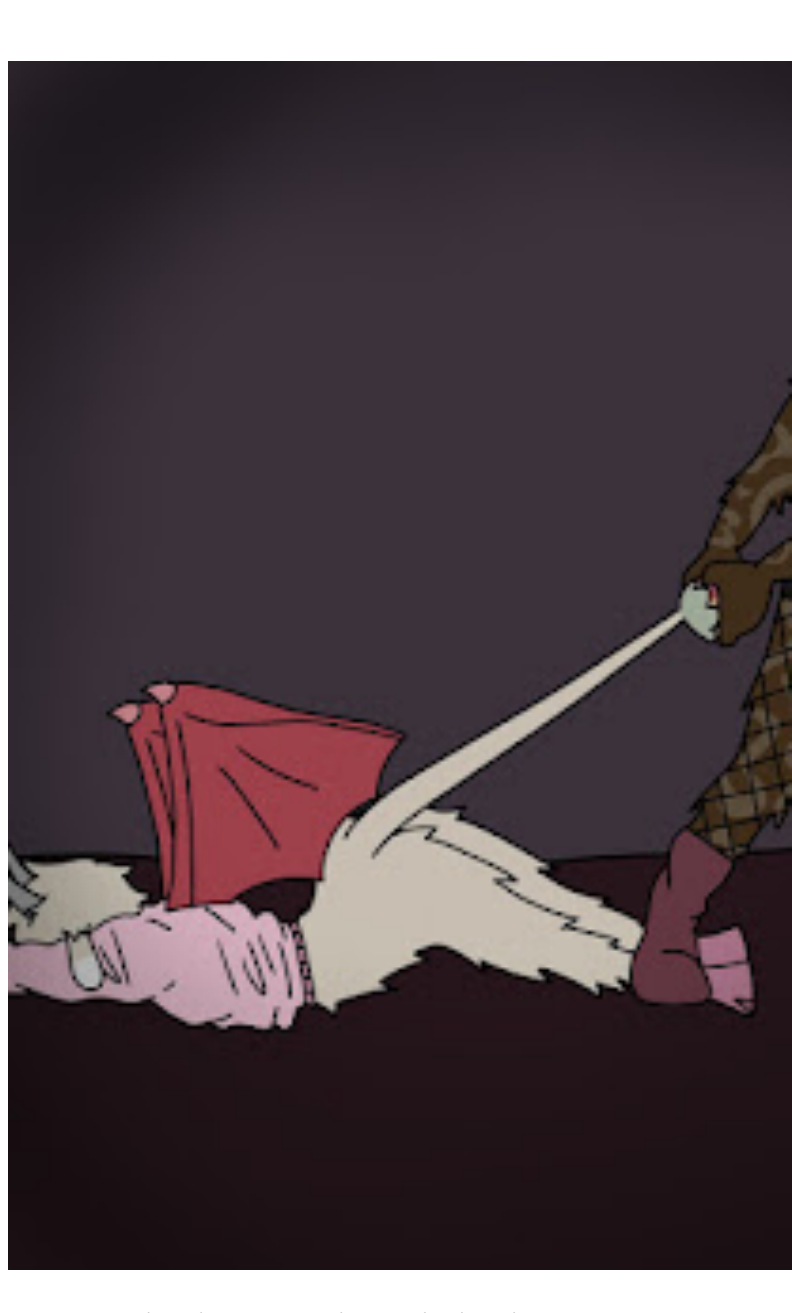
Venus continues to drag me from the tail all the way over to a dark entrance. The tunnel is gloomy and filthy. There is no lava on the walls. That's probably why it's so dark.

She pulls me down the hall to a big wooden door. She lets go of my tail and unlocks the door with a skull key. She kicks open the door and then flips me over. My face is against the floor.

What was the reason?

She then grabs my tail again and pulls me into the room. I can't see what's happening, but I know that this isn't like her at all. She always puts me first. Well.. she has to put the master first or she would be killed.

She likes what she does and she likes life as a demon. But she mainly likes to just hang out with me and be silly. She definitely has a dirty sense of humor.



As she drags me through the doorway, I can feel the stones of the floor scratching at my skin. I can feel my flesh tearing open. The dirt slides into my wounds causing more pain to occur.

I suddenly feel Venus let go of my tail and then grab my shoulders. She lifts me up from the ground and lays me up against the wall. She reaches over me and grabs some chains with cuffs. She then takes my hooves and locks them into the cuffs.

"Is it too tight?" She asks.

"Why would you care?" I'm able to talk again.

"Because I'm your bestie." She says.

"Would my bestie drag me along the ground and chain me up in a dark cellar?" I ask sarcastically.

She looks down at the ground. She is clearly not proud of doing this to me. I honestly can't blame her. All she knows is do as told, do it when told, and repeat.

I have to show her what we are doing is wrong.

"Look, Otis, I don't like chaining you up like this. I would rather do it in bed." She jokes.

"This is not the time for jokes, Ve," I roll my eyes, "I need you to take off these chains so I can show you that what we are doing is evil and wrong."

"Otis, I can't. If I refuse to lock you up, the boss will literally kill me." She looks away from me.

She doesn't want to make eye contact.

"If you knew what I knew, you would want to die. I sure do." I can see the images flash into my mind again.

"Don't say that. You are very important to me and I can't lose you."

"Ve, if I can just show you what I know.."

She interrupts me, "Otis! I like my life here in Hell! What could be so bad that it makes you want to die?!" She exclaims.

"I can't say it without crying! I just need you to come with me to the mortal realm. You need to hear what Sprout has gone through!" I can feel tears building up in my eyes.

"You want me to sacrifice myself for some target you couldn't finish?!" She starts to argue with me.

"I want you to sacrifice yourself for the better good! Just listen to Sprout's story and you will understand!"

"What is with you and that Sprout?! You seem so damn obsessed with him! Do I even matter anymore?!"

"Of course you matter! I never asked for favors in the past. So can you please do this one. I just need you to come with me."

"You just want me to start caring for your new boyfriend! You want me to just follow after your every move while you drool over that damn twink!" I can see her starting to cry.

"He's not my boyfriend! He's just very important to me! He is probably the most important person in my life right now! You're just jealous!" I immediately regret my words.

The room fills with loud silence. She looks so hurt. I don't know why I would even say that. It's not even true. I can't compare my best friend with some guy that I only met a few days ago.

I guess I just feel like he's the most important because he made me realize that I'm horrible and disgusting. He made me realize so much about my world without even knowing what I was like. What I am like.

How can I even call her jealous? How can I tell her that Sprout is more important?

"He's the most important?" Venus' voice starts to break.

"Ve, I didn't mean that." I try to go toward her.

I notice that I have my free will to move again, but I am still stopped by the chains.

"I really care about you, Otis.. but I didn't realize that you don't even care about me. I'm sorry for being a brick wall in your way." Venus turns around and heads for the door.

"Venus, I do care about you. I don't know why I wouldn't. You are not in my way at all." I explain.

She doesn't speak. I start to panic. I don't want to lose her. I've messed up too many times in my life. I can't make another mistake. Especially making the mistake of losing my best friend.

"Ve.. I'm sorry." I say softly.

She stops at the door and just stands there. Her paw is on the doorway and her head is down. Her tail is tucked and she is shaking. She then turns to face me. Her eyes are pouring out tears. Her face is rosy red.

"I'm sorry, Otis. I'm going to keep living life down here. I wish I could spend my time with you, but it looks like you have other plans with Sprout. Unless you can convince me otherwise, I will keep doing what the boss says and keep you chained up here." Her voice is so soft and sorrowful.

How could I treat my best friend like this?

I need to find a way to convince her to come with me and I need to fix what I've done.

"Ve, if you come with me to the mortal realm," I lean up from the wall. The chains hold me from falling forward. My knees are on the ground and my arms are pulled back.

"I will show you what life is like without having to follow the rules of some greater power. You can do as you please, without hurting anyone." I pause.

She is watching and listening carefully.

"Rules are meant to be broken sometimes, right?" I ask.

I can see a slight smile come to her face. She likes being a rule breaker. We have so many fun memories of us breaking rules and having a blast doing it. Over time when I grew older, I stopped breaking the rules because I wanted to become number one at the time. Venus always tried to convince me to loosen up and have some fun again, but I rarely ever did.

"You know me so fucking well." She giggles.

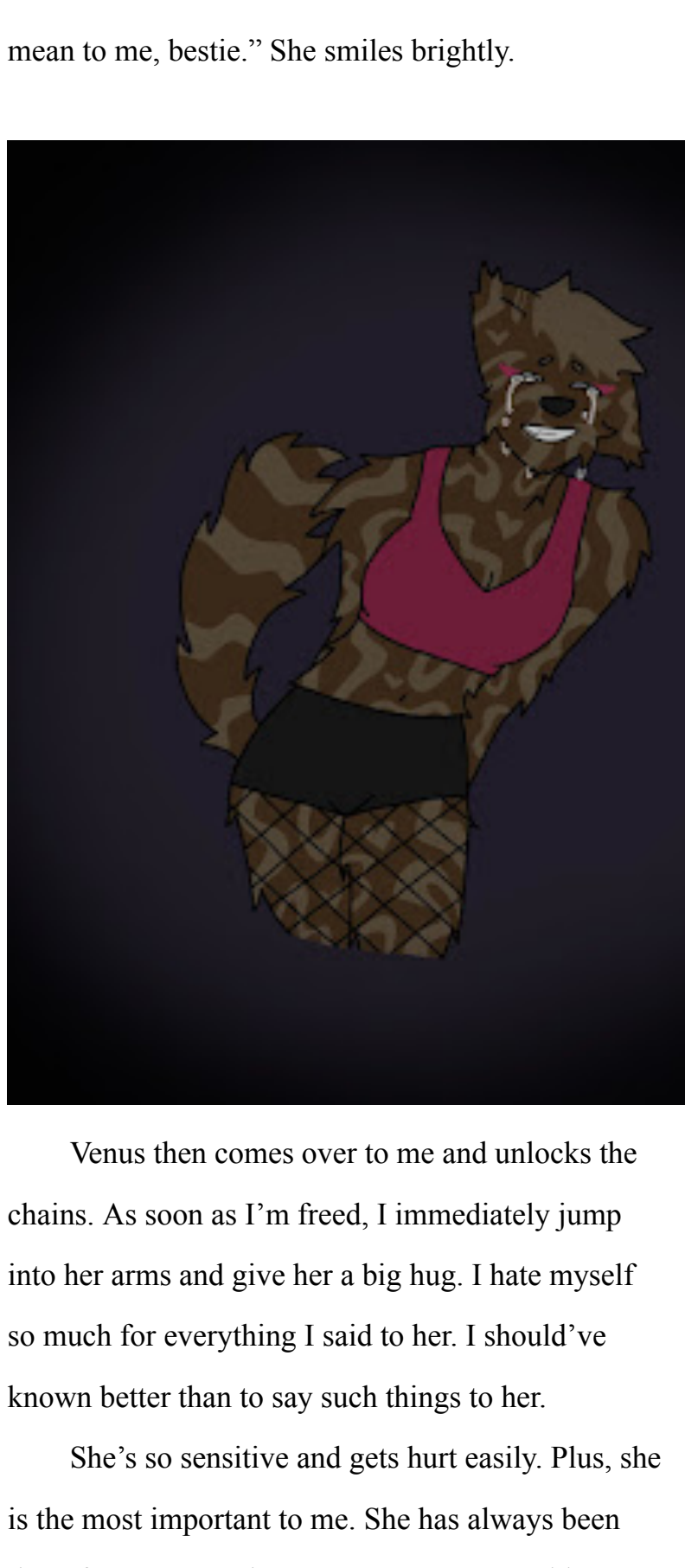
"So will you let me show you what I know?" I ask.

She steps closer to me and leans forward.

"How can I say 'no' to the person I love most?" She smiles, with tears still running down her face.

"I'm so sorry, Ve. I didn't mean anything that I said to you. You are the most important person to me. I love you so much." I can feel myself starting to cry as well.

"You have no idea how much those words mean to me, bestie." She smiles brightly.



Venus then comes over to me and unlocks the chains. As soon as I'm freed, I immediately jump into her arms and give her a big hug. I hate myself so much for everything I said to her. I should've known better than to say such things to her.

She's so sensitive and gets hurt easily. Plus, she is the most important to me. She has always been there for me, ever since we were 50 years old. I remember meeting her on that day.

She just came up to me and would bully the absolute shit out of me. I would just do it right back. But that's how I found out that she was extremely sensitive. I guess that's how she learned not to pick a fight that she knows she can't win. But we learned to get along.

Not only did we get along after a while, we were inseparable. We were best friends. She was always there for me when I was still in training. I would fail my classes over and over again, but she was there to help me when I cried and I was there for her.

I keep squeezing her tightly as I sob onto her head.

"I'm so sorry, Ve. I love you so much!" I cry.

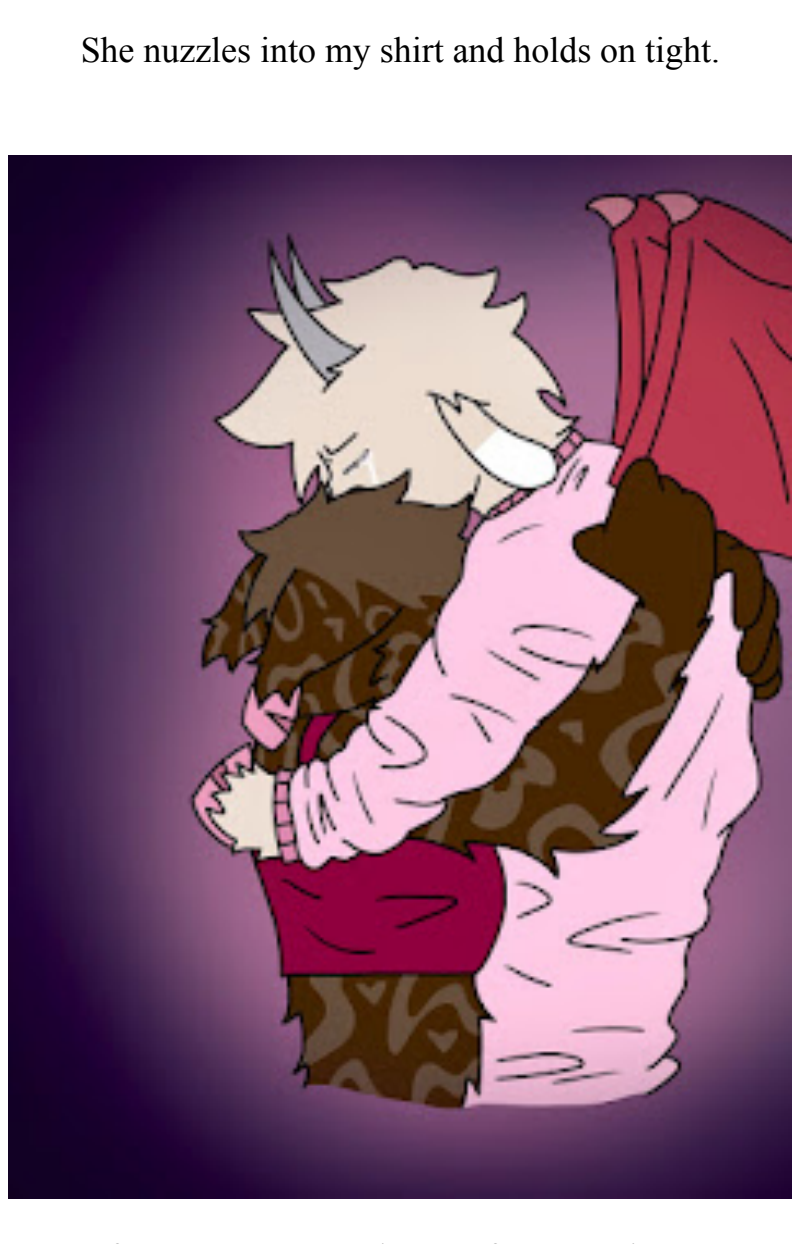
She wraps her arms around me and squeezes.

"*I love you, too.*" She says softly.

I know that Sprout has opened my mind to realize a lot about my life. But I could never compare him to my childhood best friend. Venus is beyond important to me. She is irreplaceable and priceless.

"I'll never say those things to you again!" I then lightly kiss the top of her head.

She nuzzles into my shirt and holds on tight.



After a moment, we let go of one another. We need to get back to the mortal realm and Venus needs to understand what is wrong with our society.

"Okay. Let's go to Sprout." Venus says as she sniffs.

"I think I can just travel to the mortal realm with the new power Sour Puss gave me. But I don't know if you can come with me." I say.

"You can test it out and then come back if you can." She offers.

I nod in agreement to try it. I back up from Venus to keep a good distance. I then say the words to activate the power.

"Master the almighty." I say.

Nothing happens. I thought that was the phrase.

"Oh, I forgot. The bos- Sour Puss took away the power so you couldn't escape this room." Venus mentions.

"Oh, that would explain why it's not working. Do you have a way to travel there on your own?" I ask.

Venus shakes her head, "I don't. I just use the portals and turn into an orb."

"Then we need to get to the portal." I say, marching toward the door.

Venus jumps out in front of me and stops me.

"We can't just walk out there. Everyone will see that you're out and then Sour Puss will get word of it." She explains.

"Oh, you're right. How do I go out there without being noticed?" I ask.

Venus and I try to think of a plan. It doesn't matter if she is seen. She's not in trouble at all. I just need a way to hide or something.

I then notice Venus start smirking. She has an idea, but by that face, it's going to be an interesting one.

"I have an idea.." She smirks.

"Oh, dear lord. What is it?" I ask, a little scared of what it could be.

"You can change your DNA to become a female right?" She asks.

"Uh.. Yeah. I can. That's why I'm non-binary."

"Change into a female! Everyone is used to seeing you as a masculine figure, so they won't even notice that it's you!" She sounds excited.

"That could actually work! I haven't done it in a while, but I'll try."

I step back once again and try to remember how to do it. It's been so long since I had to use that power of mine, so I have a foggy memory of how to activate it.

I remember that I have to tuck myself into a ball with my wings wrapped around me. I also recall having to do something with my tail.

I squat down into the ball with my wings covering my whole body.

What now?

I then start to play with my tail, trying different movements. I curl it around me, I wave it around, I tuck in between my legs, but nothing is working.

"This is random, but ever wonder why your tail looks like a strawberry?" Venus asks.

That's it!

"I know why!" I remember.

I then take my tail and slide it under my wings and into the pod that I have become. I pull it close to my face and open my mouth. I lightly bite down on my strawberry tail and wait.

I then can feel my body shaking. My tail starts to glow. As everything intensifies, I can feel my body changing. My chest and lower body start to feel pain. I want to cry out, but I have to keep my position.

"Otis, you are doing it!" Venus shouts.

I try to focus on the process of the transformation. If I mess up, I won't be able to completely transform. I will be stuck in the middle for a while.

The pain grows stronger and the glow burns brighter. I don't think I can take it anymore. It's been so long without doing this, my body isn't use to it.

"Aughh!!" I cry out.

The pain gets worse and worse. Stronger and stronger. Until it stops. It suddenly washes away. I slowly open up my wings and stand up.

"Oh. My. Satan." Venus gasps.

I slowly open my eyes to see Venus standing there, staring at me.

"Do I look off? Did I mess up?" I ask, worried.

My voice is high pitched.

She shakes her head and she looks me up and down.

"You're so pretty!! Trans goals!" Venus jokes.

I have no idea what I look like, so I look over at a small water puddle in the middle of the room. My reflection shows a version of me, but more feminine.

I have long flowing hair and long eyelashes. My chest is larger and my hips are wider.

"Gurl!! Baddie!!" Venus giggles.

"I think this works! But I'm still scared other demons will question me." I say.

"Why? I think you pass really well." Venus says.

"Well, here in Hell, succubuses and incubuses don't wear clothing." I explain.

"Just take off the sweater. You haven't worn one for over 200 years, so what's the difference?"

"I guess I just got used to wearing it and honestly, I want to be more modest now. But I can't wear this, or demons will recognize me." I explain.

"Here. I have an idea. Turn around and take off your sweater." Venus says.

I open my mouth, but she stops me from speaking. I do as she says and take off the sweater while facing the other way. I can hear Venus moving around and adjusting her clothes.

"Hand me your sweater and take my clothes." She says.

"Wait what?"

"Just do it. Trust me." She says.

I hand her the sweater and take her clothes.

"Put them on. If you have a different outfit and a new appearance, you pass even more." She explains.

"Oh, good idea." I understand what she is doing now.

I've never worn pants or anything on my legs before, so it's all new to me. I try to put on the fishnets, but my hooves get stuck over and over again in different holes. After multiple tries, I finally get them both in. I then slip into the shorts and cropped tank.

"You done?" I ask.

"Girl, I've been done. I've been waiting on you." She laughs.

"Your fishnets are confusing!" I laugh as I turn around.

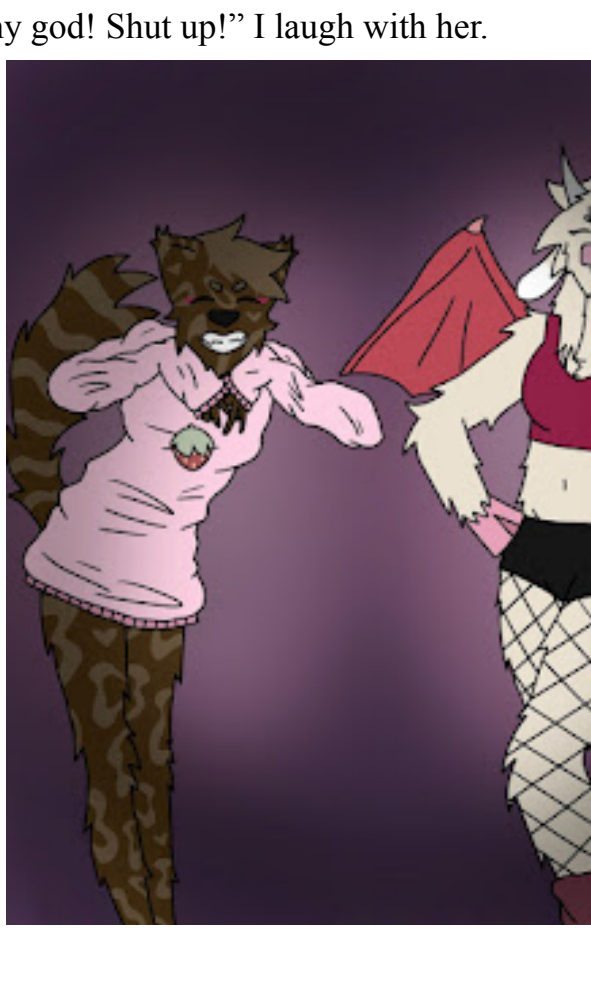
I see Venus stand there with my strawberry sweater. It's big on her, but she looks so pretty with it. I've never really seen her in something other than her classic fishnets and crop top style before. I like this look on her. She looks cozy and cute.

"So how do I look?" She asks.

"Adorable." I say, smiling, "How about me?"

"Well.. I'd say.. Sexy!" She laughs.

"Oh my god! Shut up!" I laugh with her.



We then start to quiet down and make our way out of the room and through the hallway. Venus leads the way and I follow her. As we reach the end of the tunnel, I hide behind Venus. If I walk out with her, it will look suspicious. Demons will wonder why a new demon was in the cellar. Rumors would spread.

"Alright, let's head over to the bar and then you can stop hiding behind me." Venus says.

"Okay. Sounds good."

We try to stay closer to the wall so keep me out of sight. As we make our way to the bar, I can hear all of the demons chattering. Their conversations are so disturbing. Disgusting honestly.

How come I never noticed these topics before?

I guess living in Hell just made me used to these weird and disturbing topics. I never thought much about them until now. Ever since I met Sprout, I have really opened my eyes and started noticing things that I haven't before. I now see how corrupt the Hell society is. Everyone here normalizes the most evil of things.

Venus and I make it to the bar. I stop hiding behind her and we then try to come up with a plan.

"If we just don't draw attention to us, we should be able to just fly over to the portal." Venus says.

"Sounds good. I can keep a low profile. But I need more space to fly. So we have to walk through this crowd first." I say.

Venus nods and then leads the way toward the portal. I follow her. As we go through the crowd, demons stop and stare at us. Some stop their conversations and others start murmuring.

"That chick is cute! Is she new?"

"I haven't seen that hottie before."

"I'd tap that."

What the fuck? What is wrong with these demons?

I try to walk faster to get away from the creeps. Some nudge me and try to get my attention. I hear some whistle and blow kisses.

"Hey, cutie. Got a boyfriend?" A deep voice asks.

I then suddenly feel a paw slap my bottom. I jump from surprise and fear. I turn around quickly and see a tall cat standing in front of me. He isn't wearing any clothing.

He's an incubus.

"I'm sorry. What?" I ask.

I am highly annoyed by this guy. Touching me without consent.

"I asked if you have a boyfriend." He says, grinning.

"I don't." I grumble.

"Do you want one?" He asks with a smirk on his face.

I roll my eyes. I know what he actually wants. He doesn't want a girlfriend. He wants to have intercorse.

"Not interested." I say, turning around to get back to Venus.

I suddenly feel him grab my wrist. He has a firm grip.

"But a pretty little thing like you should have a big, strong man to make you feel special." He laughs.

"I don't need no man to make me feel anything. Now you let go and I'll be on my way."

I can feel the anger rise up in me. Not only did this guy slap my ass and ask to be my boyfriend just upon meeting him, but now he is keeping me from leaving.

"Where are you going in such a hurry? Got somewhere to be?" He asks.

"Yes actually. I need to get back to my friend." I pull off his paw from my wrist and start to head toward Venus.

He then grabs me again and pulls me back. My face slams into his chest. I step back and look up at his face.

"Oh, you don't your friend right now. Why don't you come with me? I can be a lot of fun." He says.

He then pulls me in close and tries to take me away from the crowd.

I want to punch him so badly, but I can't draw attention to me and Venus.

"Let's go to the back of the bar and have some fun." He chuckles, pulling me with him.

"Let go of me! I don't want to!" I shout.

I start panicking and looking around for Venus. I spot her in the crowd. She is looking around for me.

"Just be a good girl and do as I say." He demands.

I start tugging on my hoof and try to free myself from his grip.

"Let go! Venus! Help!" I cry out.

I see Venus turn quickly. She sees the guy pulling me to the back of the bar. She then starts running toward me. The big cat then uses his paw to cover my mouth.

I start flailing around and try to cry out for help. I keep tugging and pulling to get away from him, but I can't get free.

"Kick him!" Venus shouts while running toward me.

I do as she says and use my hoof to nail him in the balls. I swing my hoof right in between his legs.

"Aughh!!" He cries out.

He then lets go of my wrist and holds onto his balls as he falls to the ground. He is on his knees, crying from the pain.

I know how it feels to be kicked in the balls. But I was never kicked in the balls with a hoof. It must be the worst feeling in the world.

Venus then grabs onto me and pulls me away from him.

"The fuck is wrong with you, creep?!" She exclaims.

"Me? Your girlfriend just nailed me in the nuts with her hoof! What's wrong with her?!" He groans in pain.

"Nothing is wrong with them, you perv! She shouts, "Let's go, babe."

Venus then pulls me away and starts walking toward the portal again. As she walks me to the portal, I start to feel something I've never felt. It's a very unsettling feeling. It's a mixture of fear and helplessness. I feel used and as if I'm not important. Like I'm an object.

What is this feeling? Why am I feeling it?

Venus and I end up at the portal, but there is a long line of demons. We stop and just wait for our turn. Venus lets go of my hoof. It drops and smacks the side of my thigh. I'm still so shaken by what happened and how I'm feeling. Venus looks over at me.

"Hey, are you okay?" She asks.

She sounds genuinely concerned for me.

"I don't know. I am feeling something I've never felt before. I feel used and like an object." I say softly.

Venus grabs me by the shoulders and uses her other paw to lift my head up. She looks into my eyes with sorrow.

"Hey, I know what that feeling is. I'm used to it around here. These demons are just like that. They take advantage of someone smaller than them. Whether it be to beat them up, or to use them for their own pleasures." She explains.

Venus is used to this?

It sickens me to know that this is normalized in Hell. Not just in Hell, but also in the mortal realm. Sprout had to deal with Noah and his friends. Now look at him. He is extremely skittish and has a panic attack every time something reminds him of that moment in his life.

Am I feeling what Sprout feels?

"Just don't let it get to you. They are small minded people and only do that because they can't find their happiness without another person to lay down." Venus assures me.

"You're used to this? You're used to demons hitting on you and sexualizing you?" I ask.

"It's Hell. Anything goes. Nothing we can do about it. Not like we can call the cops and get them arrested. It's literally their job to sexualize others." She explains.

The thing that throws me off the most from her words is that she said that it's their job. That big cat was an incubus. I'm an incubus and succubus. It's my job as well. I still can't even comprehend that I was like him. Even if I didn't fully enjoy my job, I didn't dislike it either. I never stopped to think about the poor mortals I was hurting.

I'm so glad that I found Sprout.

If it weren't for him, I would still be living my life as if nothing were wrong. I wouldn't be feeling this guilt and hatred. Not only do I hate myself for it, but I also hate Sour Puss. He made this corrupted society and made all of us work for him. But I can't just blame him. It's also my fault. I'm the one who did it. I'm the one who was using mortals as sex slaves.

"Otis, are you okay?" Venus asks.

I forgot where I was. I snap back into reality.

"Sorry, Ve. I'm just having a lot of mixed feelings about myself and this society." I say.

"Well, if it helps any, you're taking me to Sprout so I can understand what you're feeling. I will be able to help you spread the word about whatever it is." She assures me.

"Thanks, Ve. I just hope that I can convince the other demons that what we are doing is wrong, too." I sigh.

Venus lets go off my face and stands facing forward. The line starts to move forward. It looks like it's our turn. We walk toward the portal. There is a demon managing the portal gates.

"Do you have your task papers?" They ask.

"Unfortunately, we don't." Venus says.

"Well, how am I supposed to let you in? I can't let you through without proof that you're only going to the mortal realm for a task." They say.

"Why do you need proof?" I ask, "I thought we just toss it in and go through or type in the coordinates if there is no paper."

"Well, the boss had established a new rule that we must have proof of the assignment." They say.

"Why is that? Why the sudden change in rules?" Venus asks.

"Well, he would have made this rule sooner but he needed time to think about how it would affect Hell. The main reason for the new rule is because we can't have demons doing the wrong tasks and messing up the mortal realm." They explain.

Messing up the mortal realm?

I remember when Venus and I were told not to do each other's tasks before, but we were never told why.

"How could it mess up the mortal realm?" I ask the gate demon.

"There was one demon that was the demon of nightmares. He was a very rare species. But he wanted to do the job of an incubus. He went against the rule of doing another demon's task." They explain, "He went into the mortal realm and raped the target. When he came back, he just got in trouble. It seemed like it didn't affect the mortal target, but later on, we found out that the target got pregnant from the demon."

This is actually really surprising to me. How could a mortal get impregnated by a demon? I thought that wasn't possible.

"I thought demons can't impregnate mortals." Venus says.

"Apparently, only incubus and succubus demons can't get impregnated or impregnate mortals. But any other demon can. That's why we can't switch tasks. It can end up with a demon and mortal hybrid. Which is not good." The gate demon explains.

"What happened to the baby?" I ask.

"Well, that demon broke the rule about 20 years ago? So the baby either died at birth or is still living. We tried searching for the offspring before at the house, but we couldn't find it. So we are assuming that it moved out from its parent's house." The gate demon explains.

"That's crazy to think that the child could be anywhere by now. I wonder what it looks like too. Maybe it has wings like you, hon!" Venus says.

"I don't know what it looks like, but back to the matter of the portal. I can't let you through unless you have some sort of proof that you're going to do your tasks." The gate demon says.

We don't have any papers to give to the demon. We will look suspicious if we try and convince them to let us through without them.

"We weren't going through to do our tasks." Venus says.

What are you doing? You can't tell them that we are going through to talk to Sprout!

"We just forgot our engagement rings in the target's bedroom." Venus says.

"Your rings? Why did you take them off in the first place?" The gate demon asks.

"We couldn't do our tasks properly with them on. They got in the way of our work." Venus explains.

Is this demon gonna actually buy this? They can't be that stupid.

"I'll let you through, but you have to come back immediately." The demons says.

What?! They bought that?!

"It might take a few minutes to find them, but we will try and be fast." Venus says.

"Alright. Sounds good to me. Don't take too long." They say.

They then ask for the coordinates and punches them into the machine next to the portal. Venus and I hold paws and step through together.

Narrator:

Otis and Venus get through to the other side. They end up in the motel closet when passing through. Otis changes back to his male form and they switch back outfits. It is now 10am in the mortal realm and Sprout is already awake.

The Flooding Memories (Sprout's POV)

I am sitting on the edge of the bed. When I woke up, I couldn't find Otis. He wasn't in the bed, he wasn't in the bathroom, and he wasn't anywhere in the motel room. I don't know where he went. He just disappeared.

Was I annoying him? Did I make him uncomfortable by offering to share a bed?

I was honestly scared of sharing a bed. But I wanted to be nice to my new friend. I didn't want him to sleep on the dirty floor again.

Does he not want to be friends anymore?

I feel like I'm going to cry. I don't want to. I hate crying. It makes my fur grow and it's annoying to trim. I just feel so disappointed. I really wanted some friends to trust.

I know I only met him a few days ago, but he made me feel happy and safe. He protected me from Noah, he took care of me when I was having another panic attack, and he taught me how to have fun and have a good laugh.

But what was the other feeling I had with him? I felt it when he caught me from the swing and when he tackled me. It felt weird, but good at the same time. It felt like my stomach was spiraling around and like butterflies were fluttering around. My face felt warm and I wanted to hide from Otis, but I also wanted to stay by his side. I felt scared to be around him, but I felt safe around him.

Why is this feeling so confusing?

I suddenly hear a sound come from the closet. I hear something wrestling around. I look up at the closet. The door is shut. I can't see what it is.

I get up from the bed and walk slowly toward the closet. As I inch closer, I can feel my spine tingle. I'm scared of what would be inside, but I'm so curious. I get to the door and reach out my paw to grab the knob.

The door suddenly swings open and I see two people fly out and tumble on the floor. When they hit the floor, they make a huge thud. I jump from the sudden surprise. I wasn't expecting anyone to fly out. I look closely and realize that it's Otis and his friend, Venus.

I thought Otis left me. Why was he in the closet?

The two groan as they try to get up off of each other. Venus climbs off of Otis and Otis stands up straight.

"Girl, you stepped on my tail!" Venus shouts at Otis.

"You were crushing my wings!" Otis shouts back.

"Guys, what is going on?" I interrupt.

Otis brushes off the dust from the floor and Venus adjusts her shirt. I can see that Otis is in a hurry. Why?

"Sprout, I have a weird request to ask you." Otis says.

"Ha! I just realized we came out of the closet!" Venus giggles.

Otis looks at her with disapproval. She stops laughing and gets quiet.

"Why were you guys in there?" I ask, "And why did you leave Otis?"

Otis looks down. He seems like he doesn't want to talk about it. Venus steps forward.

"Well, so Otis and I are actually de-" Otis stops her from finishing her sentence.

He is covering her mouth with his hoof. He keeps giving her looks, as if he's trying to tell her to stop, without actually saying anything.

"You guys are what?" I ask, curious.

Otis moves his hoof from her and then opens his mouth to speak, but Venus interrupts.

"Deez nuts!" She shouts.

"Girl! You can't be serious for one minute?" Otis gets annoyed, but he also seems amused.

"Jeez, Ottie. I just tryna be silly." Venus rolls her eyes.

"Can someone please just explain why Otis was gone and why you both were hiding?" I ask, slightly irritated.

I am getting impatient. I guess I just want to know why Otis left and why she is here. There are so many questions I have. Such as, 'Why is she here randomly? Why does she turn into an orb? Why were they hiding in the closet?'

"Sprout, I can't explain everything, but I need you to tell Venus about your trauma." Otis says.

My trauma? Why?

"You mean.. with Noah?" I ask.

I don't like thinking about it. Everytime I hear his name or some word that reminds me of him, it brings me back to that moment. I feel like I lose control and I can't think straight. Then that stupid voice comes into my mind. He tells me to do these horrible things.

"Noah? Oh, that's the name of my target I was telling you about a few days ago, Otis!" Venus blurts out.

Target?

"Yes, I know, Ve. I just need you to hear the story about him from Sprout's perspective." Otis says.

"Wait. Why does she have to know? I really don't want to talk about it." I say.

Otis looks over at me and then steps closer. I back away. I don't know why I backed away. Otis is my friend and I know he wouldn't hurt me. Maybe all the talk about Noah has got me nervous of my surroundings.

"Sprout, it's hard to explain. I know it's hard for you to talk about, but I promise you that it's really important and for a good cause." Otis explains.

"But, even if I wanted to.." I pause.

I can feel my heart rate speed up. My paws start shaking and my legs get weak. My ears are pulled back and my tail is tucked.

"Everytime I think about it, my mind turns into a mess." My voice is shaky.

"A mess? What do you mean? Like you get flashbacks?" Otis asks.

"Yeah. But my mind also.." I stop again.

I can feel my entire body trembling. My head starts to ache and my stomach is spinning around.

"Are you alright, hun?" Venus asks.

"My mind.. My.. it starts.. talking.. it.." I feel dizzy.

I start to lose my balance and pain intensifies. I can feel myself start to fall over. I start leaning forward and fall over. I feel Otis grab me before I hit the ground. I can hear him trying to say something, but it just sounds like muffled mumbling.

"My mind.. tells.. me to.." I can't get the words out.

I can feel my eyes start to close shut. I try to stay awake, but can't. I want to tell Otis about what's going on in my mind, but at the same time I don't want to.

I want to know what's wrong with me and why my mind talks to me, but I am also too embarrassed. He will think I'm a freak. No one will believe that my brain talks to me.

Maybe it’s good that I’m passing out.

“Sprout! Wake up! Please!” I hear a voice.

I start to open my eyes. There is a bright light shining into my eyes. I look around and see Venus holding me.

“Sprout! Please wake up! Otis will be devastated if you don’t!” She screams.

I notice her crying. There are tears rolling down her face and dripping onto the floor. I start to sit up and come back to reality.

“Sprout! Thank goodness! I’m so glad you're awake!” Venus exclaims.

I look around the room for Otis, but I can’t find him. He disappeared again. I look over at Venus. She is wiping away her tears.

“Why are you crying?” I ask.

“I-I just got scared. I saw you pass out in Otis’ arms. He went to get some proper food and other things you will need. Then I was left to take care of you.” Venus explains.

I tilt my head in confusion. I understand what happened, but why was she so scared? It must’ve been really terrifying if it brought tears to her eyes.

“What was so scary?” I ask.

“Well.. I don’t want to say.” She says, looking down.

“Why not? Did Otis do something?” I ask.

“No. I just don’t think you want to know.” She says.

“Please tell me.”

Venus shakes her head. She refuses. It must be pretty scary if she can't even say it.

What could it be?

“Alright, I won’t make you. But I just want to know if you’re okay-” I pause.

I notice a big cut on her arm. It looks deep. She then notices me staring at the cut and quickly covers it with her paw.

“Where did that come from?” I ask.

“It’s nothing. Just a scratch.” she says.

“What scratched you?”

“I just tripped and the corner of the side table cut me.” She explains.

I look behind me and look at the side table. The corner doesn’t seem sharp. It wouldn’t be able to cut so deep. Even if it could, there would be blood on it from Venus scraping against it.

“But it’s not shar-” I get interrupted by the motel door swinging open.

I quickly turn my head toward the door. Otis comes rushing in with some food, water, and some bottles of..

Drugs?

“I got Sprout some food and water because he might not be eating enough. His legs looked shaky, like he couldn’t hold his weight. So he might have an iron deficiency and needs to hydrate as well. Then I got some ibuprofen for any pain he might have.” Otis says as he drops all the stuff on the floor beside me.

“Sprout is awake. He seems okay.” Venus says to Otis.

“What is ibuprofen?” I ask Otis.

“It’s a type of legal drug to ease pain. Like medisan.” Otis explains, “Were you worried about it?”

“Oh, I just saw the bottle and it looked like my parents' drugs. So I got scared for a second.” I explain.

“Don’t worry. I won’t give you anything illegal or harmful. But how much have you eaten yesterday?” He asks.

I honestly can’t remember what I ate. I remember that I ate breakfast with Otis at a restaurant. Then we went to see Captain at the cafe. I got some coffee and tea for everyone, but I ended up not drinking mine because I spilled it when I saw..

Noah.

“I can’t remember. We ate breakfast together, but I never ate anything else.” I answer.

“I think that’s the problem. You are being starved. Here, have a sandwich.” Otis then hands me a sub with ham, lettuce, onions, and cheese.

I take the food from his hooves and take a few bites. It tastes so good. The flavor combination just melts in my mouth. I continue to chow down the meal.

“Damn, boy! When was the last time you had a big meal?” Venus asks.

“I was never properly fed as a kid, I just ate from the trash. Then after I ran away, I met Noah. He cooked me eggs and ramen most times. Sometimes peanut butter and jelly. So I never really had a good meal. Just snacking randomly.” I explain.

“Well at least Noah was nice enough to give you some food. I bet he is a good friend of yours.” Venus smiles.

I stop chewing my food and put down the sandwich. I swallow what I have in my mouth and then look down. I hate thinking about him. Everytime I do, my body shuts down. To even hear ‘friends’ and ‘Noah’ in the same sentence is sickening.

“Ve, Noah is not Sprout’s friend.” Otis corrects her.

“Oh, why not? He seems like a nice guy!” She asks.

“Well, I was trying to get Sprout to explain what happened, but he doesn’t want to. So, I won’t make him.” Otis explains.

“Well, from what I’ve seen, Noah seems like a nice guy. Other than the time that I found him drunk, crying on the floor, begging for someone to come back.” Venus says.

She’s met him before?

It sounds like she knows who he is. From her description, he was drunk and crying for someone to come back. I remember running away from his apartment. He was on the floor, drunk. Then I tripped over him. I heard him yell at me, but I can’t remember what he said.

If she met him at that time, then how did she get inside? Maybe Noah went outside looking for me and ended up on the ground again. That’s probably when she met him.

“I wonder who he was talking about.” Venus says.

Otis then steps into the conversation again.

“Venus, stop talking please.” He says softly.

“Sorry.” She apologies.

Otis looks stressed out. I think he really wants me to tell Venus how Noah treated me. If he went to go get her from her house and is asking desperately for me to tell her, it must be extremely important.

“Otis, I will tell Venus about what happened to me if you promise to tell me why at some point soon. It doesn’t have to be now, but I think I should know why if I’m going to be trauma dumping.” I compromise.

Otis’ face lights up. Not with excitement, but with determination. I just hope that my venting will be for a good cause.

Narrator:

Sprout then told the full story about what had happened to him. He explained the abuse his parents had done ever since he was born and how he was never properly taken care of.

He then explained how he met Noah and how they were friends for over 2 years, but later on, the friendship died from the reveal of the toxic relationship. He told Venus what Noah did to him everyday without any mercy.

He also explained how he was having a panic attack one day and that’s what caused him to run away again. Then leading to him meeting Otis for the first time.

“..and that’s why I hate Noah and have panic attacks when I am reminded of him.” I wrap up my story.

Venus’ face is plastered with horror. Her eyes are wide and filled with tears. I look over to Otis and see him turned the other way, covering his face with his sleeve. I can see him shaking.

Both are crying and are horrified by what I had just told them.

“Sorry, I probably shouldn’t have gotten into detail.” I apologize.

“Oh, sweetie, don’t be sorry. I’m just feeling sad for you.” Venus says while wiping her tears.

I look over at Otis again. He is still hiding his face.

“Otis? Are you okay?” I ask, tapping his shoulder.

I can hear him stiff into his sleeve. He then lifts his head up and wipes away his tears.

“I’m okay. Don’t worry about me.” He assures me.

“Do you want a hug, hun? You seem like you need one.” Venus offers.

“I don’t think he wants to be touched right now, Ve.” Otis says.

“No. No. I want a hug. It makes me feel safe, depending on the person.” I jump in.

If I’m being fully honest with myself, I wouldn’t usually accept the hug. I do get scared with physical touch, but at the same time, I like having someone I trust giving me some care. It makes me feel protected and like no one can hurt me in that moment.

“Group hug then!” Venus leans in.

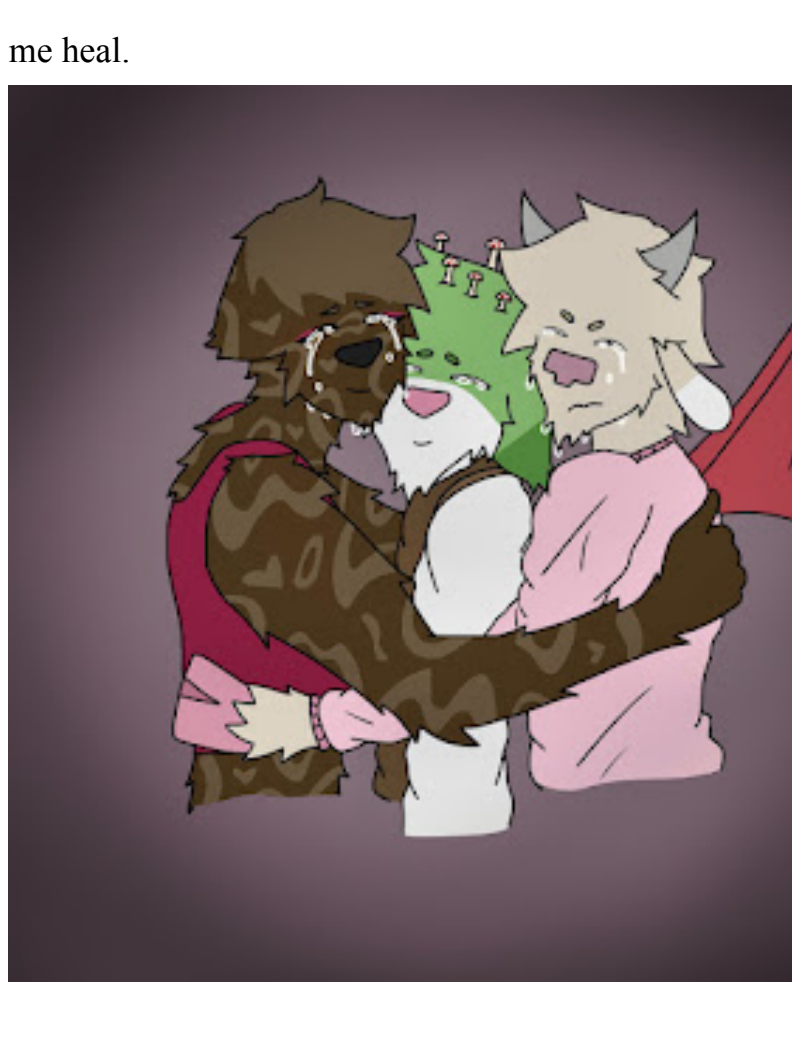
Otis and Venus lean toward me and wrap their arms around me. I flinch for a moment, but let myself calm down. I give into the feeling of fear and just think about how thankful I am to have some friends like Otis.

I can feel the warmth of Otis and Venus heating up my body. I am concealed into a soft but tight hug. I feel a sense of relaxation. I feel like I can release some tension I have been holding inside. I guess I have been holding onto the constant pressure of trying to watch my surroundings forever, but never could let it go until now.

“I’m so sorry, Sprout. No one should ever have to go through that.” Venus whispers as she gently squeezes.

“I’m so sorry for everything that happened to you.” Otis cries as he hugs me.

I’ve never felt this feeling of comfort before. It feels sad, but good at the same time. I feel bad for making them cry, but at the same time, I’m glad they understand that I need some comfort. I am hurting from the flooding memories, but they help me heal.



Venus, Otis, and I are all sitting on the floor with some tissues. We have all calmed down and stopped crying. I still feel a bit overworked from all the venting and crying, but I do feel a sense of relief of being able to get that off of my chest. Sometimes I feel bad if I tell people what happened to me in my past.

I don’t them to think that I’m seeking attention when I’m just seeking help. I want to get help to figure out what is wrong with me. I want someone to tell me why I experience that voice in my head, but I’m too scared to tell anyone about it. I don’t know what to do to get the help I want and need.

“So Ve, do you see what I mean? I told you that it was bad.” Otis asks Venus.

“I now understand, Ottie. I see why you were so concerned for poor Sprout and why you were so emotional about it.” Venus replies.

I listen in on their conversation, listening to each word come out of their mouths. I want to ask Otis why he needed me to tell Venus my past, but I don’t think he is ready to tell me. I did tell him that he could inform me later. But I am still very curious.

“I can actually understand a bit of what you feel Sprout. Where I live, men and women treat me like an object, too. It’s non-stop everyday, so I’m used to it and learned how to ignore them. But I am extremely sorry for what happened to you. You never deserved any of that.” Venus says solemnly.

“And I’m sorry that you have to deal with that, Venus.” I respond, “No one should have to go through that, especially everyday.”

“It’s nothing too bad. Just some cat calling and comments about my body. I know how to fight for myself though. I may look like I’m too small and tiny to defend myself, but I used to be one hell of a man!” Venus jokes.

I pause for a minute, confused.

Man?

Otis looks over at me and notices my confusion. He then looks over at Venus and nudges her, signaling something.

“Oh! That’s right! You don’t know about that!” Venus chuckles, “I am actually a transwoman! I used to dress more masculine and I didn’t wear makeup. I used he/him pronouns and was a full on man! But I think deep down, I always knew I was a woman.”

“Oh, I see. I’ve heard of trans people but I never fully understood what it meant. I only knew that they pretend to be the other gender.” I say.

“Well, it’s more like identifying as the opposite gender rather than pretending or dressing up. Even though they might be a male at birth, they are female in their heart and mind. But there are more than two genders! Otis here is non-binary!” Venus explains.

“Non-binary?” I ask.

“It means that I identify as neither male or female. I may use he/they pronouns, but I don’t consider myself to be a man or a woman.” Otis explains.

“Oh, that’s interesting. In a good way!” I say.

I really like learning about the different lifestyles and identities in the world. I grew up in an isolated home where I never knew much about anyone else. I just learned to keep my mouth shut and do as I’m told.

I remember when I was younger, I peeked into my mother’s room and saw on the television that there were two males kissing. I didn’t understand at the time that it was ‘bad’ or ‘wrong,’ until my mother shut off the television right after she saw that scene.

But ever since I saw it as a kid, I felt like I wanted it. I never really saw anything intimate in my life, even between my parents. They would yell and argue all the time. There was rarely ever a time with silence. But I felt like I wanted to kiss someone. Not necessarily a boy or a girl, but just someone. I believe that’s how I found out that I was pan, but I never knew that there was a word for it until I met Noah.

Although I wanted to kiss someone, I wanted to do it with consent. Same thing with sex. I wanted to have it with someone special, I wanted to find someone to love and that would love me for me. Not use me for my body and for their own personal pleasure.

“So, Sprout, what do you plan on doing with your life?” Venus asks.

“My life?” I ask.

“Like, what do you want to do for your career? I have a job! But… I think I want to quit and find a new one.” She explains.

“I don’t know. I have my first day at work with Captain on Thursday, but I don’t really plan on doing that my whole life.” I say.

“Well no one really knows what they want to do at such a young age. Plus you haven’t had many opportunities to explore different hobbies and skills.” Otis explains.

“That’s true. Hopefully I can pick up some skills at the plant shop!” I say with excitement.

I then look over at Venus, she is rocking herself a little bit and fidgeting with her paws.

“What made you want to quit your job, Venus?” I ask her.

She jolts up and her face changes to a big smile. She is forcing it.

Why?

“Oh! I just don’t really like my job anymore. It is a..weird job.” She explains.

“Weird? How so?” I ask, curious.

“Well, we don’t have to talk about it right now.” She says.

I nod, respecting that she doesn’t want to talk about it right now. I can tell that there is something going on. Maybe she hates her job for a good reason. It must make her upset.

“Well, what do you do for work, Otis?” I turn to Otis.

“I.. uh..” He is hesitant.

“Do you hate your job, too? What do you do?” I ask.

“I.. I work at Walmart. I just work as the cashier.” He says.

“Oh, that’s cool! Does it get boring? Is that why you hate it?” I ask again.

He nods.

I still feel as though that they are hiding something. They didn’t want to tell me why they needed me to tell Venus my trauma and they won’t further explain their jobs. But I should respect their boundaries. I would personally like my boundaries to be respected, too.

Venus then stands up and stretches her arms. She yawns.

“Well, I think I should be getting home. I’m a bit tired and I shouldn’t stay here for too long. You wanna come with me, Ottie?” She asks.

Otis stands up, too, stretching his legs.

“I might stay the night here if it’s okay with Sprout.” He then turns to me, “Do you mind if I stay the night again?”

I don’t see why I wouldn’t want him to. He has stayed here twice before already. Plus, it seems like he doesn't want to go home. Maybe his home is too much for him to handle. Maybe his family doesn’t treat him right. I want to help him in any way I can.

“I don’t mind! I can put the pillow between us again.” I say.

“Alright! I’ll let you two be and I’ll be on my way. I might visit every so often. Just let me know, Ottie, if you want some alone time with Sprout here.” She chuckles.

“Venus! Shut up!” Otis shouts in an annoyed, but humorous tone.

She sure does like to make a lot of those dirty jokes.

“Alight! Alright! Just give me a hug, bestie, and then I’ll be on my way!” She leans into Otis.

Otis and her hug. I notice that Otis kisses the top of her head when they hug.

“Alright, if you need me at all, just let me know, Ve.” Otis says.

“Same to you!” She says, “Byee! Bye Sprout!”

She then turns into the orb again and disappears.

I’m still curious about how she can do that.

Narrator:

Sprout and Otis then lay down in bed with the pillow between them. They can’t seem to fall asleep so fast, so they stay up and chit chat to get to know each other some more.

As I am listening to Otis talk about his interests, I can’t help but feel that feeling again. My chest hurts, but it's not too painful. I can hear my heart beating in my head, but I know that it is actually in my chest.

Can Otis hear my heart beat? I hope not.

If Otis hears my heart beat, it must be very loud. It sounds very loud to me. I would hate for him to hear it. That would be very embarrassing. He might think I'm weird or a freak.

I don't even know what is happening to my body every time I feel this way. I don't like this feeling, but I also don't hate it.

How come I only feel this when I'm around Otis?

"I would say my favorite drink is.. Strawberry milk!" Otis says.

I completely forgot about the conversation we were having. I think we were just saying our favorite things.

"Um.. my favorite drink is matcha!" I join in again.

"Alright! It's your turn!" He smiles.

"Um.. my favorite.. memory is going to the park with you and Captain!" I say.

"Ooh! That's a good one! I think my favorite memory is.. also hanging out with you!" He chuckles.

"I love this game!" I exclaim.

"Me, too! It's so fun getting to know you!" Otis exclaims.

I can't stop staring at Otis' face. Not like in a judging way, but more like I like looking at him. He makes me feel safe and comfortable. Seeing him smile and laugh makes me smile and laugh.

But when he's so close to me, I can feel my face getting warmer and my heart starts racing again.

"Sprout?" Otis asks, "Would you consider me to be a close friend of yours?"

I snap back into reality. I am a bit confused and surprised by his question, but I don't mind answering it.

"Um.. yeah! You are silly, fun, caring, brave, and you stood up for me. Dang! You even beat up Noah for me!" I say cheerfully.

"Oh, well thanks for the compliments! But how could I not beat the shit out of Noah? He was horrible!" He exclaims.

"I kinda wish I was there to see you pound him down." I chuckle.

"Oh, boy! I went all out! There was a lot of blood. So I don't think you would have wanted to see that." He chuckles nervously.

"I am actually used to seeing a lot of blood and violence. My parents would quite literally try to kill me everyday. I honestly don't know how I am still alive today." I explain.

"I'm so sorry about that, Sprout. If it helps at all, I would gladly beat the shit out of your parents, too!" He jokes.

I laugh along with him. I've never met someone so willing to stand up for me, even if it puts them at risk. Otis really could've gotten hurt. Noah knows how to land a hit. I remember when he would slap me when I didn't do as he said.

"Alright, let's get onto a more light hearted topic." Otis says.

"Oh, sorry! I didn't mean to make it sad." I apologize.

"No. No. You're fine! I just would rather you not think about the sad memories. I want you to be the happiest you can be!" He explains

I can feel my face light up from his words. I've never had someone care about me the way he does. I can feel my tail start to wag back and forth under the covers. My ears pop up and I loosen up. I usually always feel tense, no matter where I am, but I feel more relaxed at this moment. Lately, Otis has been making me feel more safe and comfortable. He really makes sure I'm okay with everything happening. I really do appreciate it.

"Let's see.. my favorite thing to do is.. explore new things!" Otis exclaims.

"My favorite thing to do is also explore new things!" I shout.

"Oh, really? Why is that?" He asks.

I sit there in the bed and think for a moment.

"Well, I never got to explore anything at all in the past. Even after I ran away and met Noah, I still didn't get to see as much as I wanted to. I had two years to do whatever, but I only ever went to a park, mall, and around Noah's apartment." I explain.

"Oh, okay! I need to explore the world with you sometime!" Otis says, excited.

"What about you? What makes you want to explore new things?" I ask him.

Otis pauses for a minute, thinking about his answer.

"Well, I guess where I'm from, I didn't go out as much. I was too busy doing what I was told. I didn't have much freedom to have some fun outside of my home. I had some good laughs with my friend, Venus, but whenever I went out, it was just to do my job." He explains.

"Well it must be annoying to work at Walmart all the time." I joke.

"Definitely. I hate being told what to do. Especially by some stupid Sour Puss." He grumbles.

I start to yawn from tiredness.

"I think I'm falling asleep. I wish I could stay up and talk to you some more." I yawn again.

"Well, I can still talk to you while you try to sleep. I kinda like having someone talk to me while I'm trying to sleep. Makes me feel safe and protected." Otis offers.

"You don't mind?" I ask.

"Of course not! I can just rant about random stuff and let you sleep."

"Oh, okay." I smile.

I then lay my head down on the pillow, pulling the covers over my shoulder. I start to close my eyes. I want to sleep, but at the same time, I want to keep talking with Otis. I want to keep spending time with him. He makes me feel so happy and safe.

I keep my eyes slightly open, watching Otis as he talks to me. He seems so happy and wholesome. I start to notice small details on his face.

He has a big, pastel pink nose, long floppy ears, and blonde fluffy fur. He has sharp teeth and a big bright smile. His horns are grey and a small size compared to Noah.

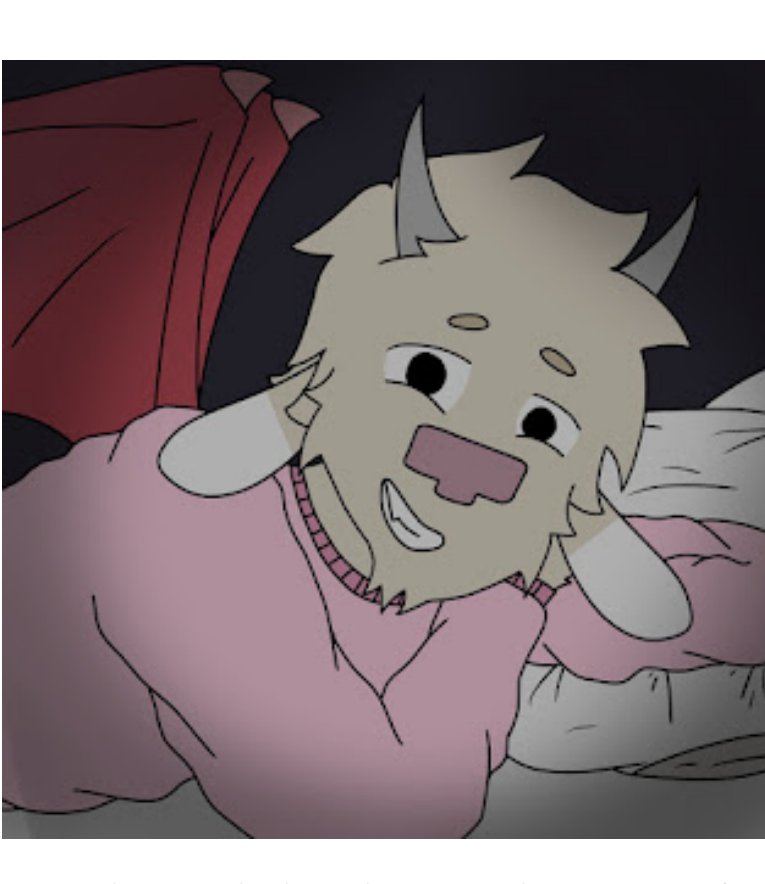
I do see how Otis and Noah look very similar, but I feel safe around Otis. But I only just met him a few days ago. How can he be so important to me already?

I continue to stare into his eyes as he speaks. I can feel my tail start to wag again, but more subtly. My face feels hot. I keep watching him as he rants about random things.

He then turns to me and makes eye contact with me. I go into a panic. I don't know why, but I felt embarrassed. I can feel my face getting even hotter. I quickly shut my eyes and shove my face into the pillow between us, trying to hide from him.

What am I doing? Why am I like this?

I wait a moment and then slowly glance up from the pillow. Otis is smiling at me. He looks so sweet and wholesome. He usually looks more intimidating, but right now, I feel the urge to..hug him. But it's not a hug I want. I want more than a hug. I want to cuddle with him…



Why am I thinking this way? This is so out of the ordinary for me!

I want to turn away again to hide my face, but I can't help but stare at him. He's just so..

Cute…

"Good night, Sprout." I hear Otis say right before I doze off.

Narrator:
We are now moving into one year from that night. Sprout went to work every Thursday with Captain. He learned how to work with different plants and he learned many different types of mushrooms. He found out that his own mushrooms are called, "Amanita Muscaria." He loved learning more about plants and plant based species. He gained more and more skills for the real world. He gained more confidence in speaking with others and learning to control his anxiety attacks. He learned ways to calm himself down and keep himself from being triggered.

Otis and Sprout became even closer friends. They hung out very often. They did of course take breaks from one another to focus on themselves every so often. But they have definitely grown a stronger relationship as friends.

Sprout slowly did realize that the feeling he was having was love. He didn't know what love really felt like until he did some research. He was still very unsure of what realy love mean, but he did know that Otis made him feel some level of love.

After Venus discovered what the demons were doing to the mortals was wrong and evil, she tried taking less tasks. She unfortunately was unable to talk to the Devil because she didn't want to be killed. But she did request that she takes fewer assignments as a break, but in reality, she was skipping out so she doesn't have to hurt as many mortals. Whenever she was forced into doing her tasks, she wouldn't do anything too bad to them. She would make them dance around and do silly stuff, rather than hurting them.

Venus and Sprout got to talk more and get to know each other. They then became good friends, but not extremely close friends. Otis and Sprout later introduced Venus to Captain.

Venus was of course making her flirty jokes to Captain upon first meeting him. But Captain knew how to joke along with her. He never took it seriously, nor did Venus. But eventually Captain stated his boundaries about the jokes. He wanted to make sure that she knew that he wasn't actually interested. She felt the same.

Now back to the story. One year after that night.

He's Here (Otis' POV)

It's been a long time since I first met Sprout. Things have definitely changed a lot. I notice how Sprout is more confident in meeting new people. When I met him, he was super tense and shy. He would stutter every time he spoke.

Even after we became friends, he was still very shy and careful. He would flinch at every sudden move.

Now he is more direct when speaking to someone, whether it be a friend or a stranger. Of course he still takes the precautions of being careful around people he doesn't know. But he's nailed talking in conversations. I'm really proud of him.

I walk over to the bathroom from the bed. Sprout is still sleeping. I open the bathroom door and walk in. I look into the mirror and notice my fur getting longer.

I really need a trim.

All of my fur is scruffy and in my face. I want to cut my fur but my hooves make it too difficult to hold scissors. I need to get Sprout's help, but I don't want to disturb him while he's sleeping. He had a long day yesterday at work.

There were a lot of customers asking a lot of questions. He didn't know the answer to all of them and he struggled to help them with what they needed. Sprout tends to feel bad when he can't make everyone happy. He hates making people feel disappointed or sad. Even though it wasn't really his fault.

I suddenly hear a knock on the bathroom door.

"Hey, Otis?" I hear Sprout's voice.

"Yes?" I reply.

"I need to use the bathroom real quick. Are you done in there?" He asks.

"Oh, yeah. I was just going to try and cut my fur." I say as I open the bathroom door.

Sprout is standing outside the door. His fur is really messy and he isn't wearing his brown vest. He is only wearing his white button up. The first few buttons are unbuttoned. The shirt is hanging over one of his shoulders. I notice that his mushrooms are overgrown, too.

He looks so cute.

"Why aren't you wearing your brown vest?" I ask.

"Oh, I just got hot in the middle of the night. So I took it off to remove some layers. But why were you going to cut your fur?" He asks.

"Well, I was planning on it, but my hooves make it too difficult to grab scissors. So I was going to ask you to help, but I didn't want to wake you up." I explain.

Sprout then yawns and asks if he can use the bathroom real quick.

"I won't be too long. I will help you cut your fur when I'm done." He says.

"Alright, sounds good to me. Want me to grab your vest so you can put it on?" I ask.

He nods. I then move out of the way and let Sprout in the bathroom. I then run over to the bed and snatch his vest. I then run over to him and hand it to him. He then closes the door as I walk away.

I then flop onto the bed and sigh. I hate how I get flustered so easily. I just want to be able to hang out with Sprout without worrying that I'm going to make him uncomfortable. I would never do anything to him, but I just don't want him to see me blush and get all flustered. He'll think I will do something to him.

I would never try to do anything to him without consent. Even so, I'm too scared to ask him anyways. I couldn't ask him, not after everything he's been through.

I don't like that I feel this way for Sprout, but I can't help it. I don't know why. I wish I could stop feeling this way for him.

"I know why." I hear a deep voice.

Who is that?

"Haven't you missed me, Otis?" I hear it again.

No. It can't be. It's been over a year.

"You thought you could just run away, didn't you? Have you forgotten that I have control over you?"

Sour Puss.

I am now hiding in the closet. I keep hearing his voice roar in my mind. He keeps teasing me and mocking me. I know what he's trying to do. That's why I locked myself into the closet.

"Just wait a little longer. I will finally give you what you truly want." He chuckles.

"I don't want anything!" I shout.

"Of course you do. I heard you talking about what you want to do with Sprout." He says.

"I never said anything like that! I was literally stating how I don't want to do anything to him!" I yell.

"No need to raise your voice, Otis. You may think that you don't want that from Sprout. But you're a succubus and incubus. It's in your blood to want that." He explains in a condescending tone.

"I don't! Stop making this up! If anything, you are the one who wants that, you fat bastard! You creep! You predator!" I cry out.

"Now, Otis, that's no way to talk to your creator. I made you. I made you for this very thing. You have no other purpose." He chuckles.

"Shut up! I will never do such a thing again! You tricked me my whole life! For 211 years! I thought I was doing good by serving you! But you only want to watch mortals suffer! And for what?! Is that funny to you?!" I cry.

"You poor creature. You have been brainwashed by these disgusting mortals. You used to be one of my favorites. You were number 4 on the ranking board. You wanted to be number 1. You had a mission and a dream. Then you threw it all away for some mortal." He grumbles.

"The mortals aren't the disgusting ones! Us demons are! We kill, abuse, rape, possess mortals. And for fun?! For us to be famous in the demon world?! It's wrong and cruel!" I scream, "And I wasn't brainwashed by mortals, I was brainwashed by you! All the demons were and still are!"

I then suddenly hear the bathroom door open.

Sprout.

"Otis, where did you go?" Sprout asks.

His voice is muffled. I can't hear the best in the closet.

"Shall I meet you good friend?" Sour Puss chuckles.

"No! Don't touch him!" I scream.

"Otis? Are you in the closet?" Sprout asks.

"Sprout! I want you to run away! As far as you can!" I scream.

"What? Why? I thought I was going to cut your fur." He asks.

"Sprout, I can't explain it right now, but please run! Stay away from me!" I cry.

I can feel my eyes start to water. My tears are rolling off my cheeks and onto the floor. My breath is heavy and my head starts to ache.

"Otis, you're scaring me. What is going on?" Sprout's voice becomes clearer to me.

He's right by the door. I keep trying to fight back against Sour Puss. My head aches even more. The pain grows more intense. I feel my horns growing. I then see a pink light shining on the wall and door of the closet.

"My turn to take the wheel on this ride." Sour Puss chuckles.

I try to move my limbs, but I can't. I can't move anything. Sour Puss has taken my free will. All I can do is see.

I see my body lift up from the floor of the closet. I see my hoof reach out for the door knob.

No! Stop it! Please!

I can't talk either. I try to gain my control again, but I can't. Sour Puss opens the door and I see Sprout standing there. He is standing still, not moving.

"So you're Sprout?" Sour Puss asks Sprout.

"Uhm.. yeah? Otis, you're acting weird. Wait.. why are you glowing?" Sprout asks, nervous.

"Oh, yes. How could I forget? I'm Otis and you're Sprout." Sour Puss then steps closer to Sprout.

I can see Sprout backing up.

"Otis, you're scaring me. This isn't funny. Why are you glowing? Why are your horns cracked?" Sprout is trembling.

I can't stand to see this happen! Sour Puss, stop! Please!

"You have no idea how long I have been waiting for this moment.." Sour Puss chuckles.

I wish Sour Puss didn't use my voice when speaking. It makes it seem like it's me doing this.

"F-for what? Otis, what are you doing? You're really scaring me! It's not funny!" Sprout cries.

Sour Puss gets closer and closer to Sprout. Sprout backs up into the bed and then trips. He falls into the bed. I can see the fear in his eyes.

"Let's make this quick and easy, Wyatt.." Sour Puss chuckles.

"W-wyatt..?" Sprout trembles.

No! Don't you dare use that name! And don't touch him! Stop it! Please! I'm begging you!

Sour Puss ignores my cries. I know he can hear me.

Sour Puss! Listen to me! Please! I'll do anything! Stop it!

I then see Sour Puss pin down Sprout to the bed.

"Take it all off.." Sour Puss demands.

"Otis! What are you doing?! This isn't like you! Stop it!" Sprout screams.

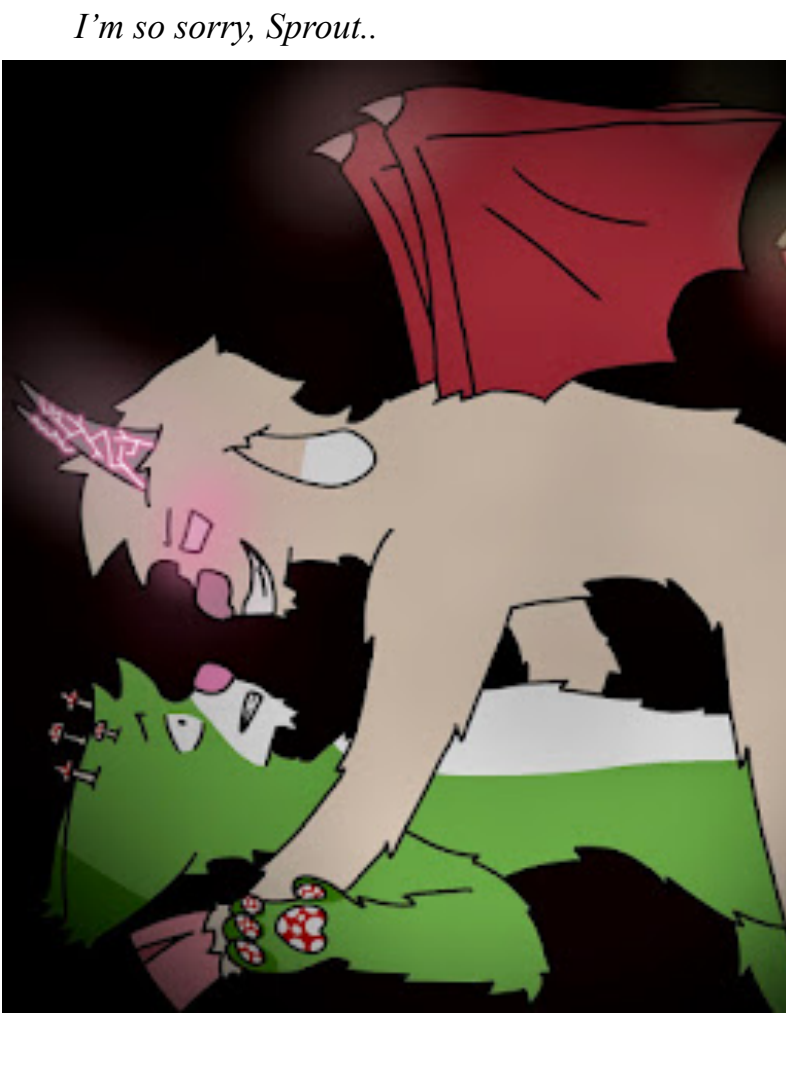
Sour Puss!! Please!! Stop it!

I feel like I'm going to cry, but I can't.

"Take your clothes off, Wyatt!" Sour Puss roars.

I can see that Sprout doesn't want to, but he does anyway. I hate this so much. I refuse to watch anymore. I want to save Sprout, but I can't. There's nothing I can do.

I'm so sorry, Sprout..



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I wake up in the bed. I look around the room. It's dark. I turn to my left and see Sprout.

Fuck.

I sit up and adjust myself. I look at myself and see that I'm wearing anything. I look at the edge of the bed and see both me and Sprout's clothes laying on the covers.

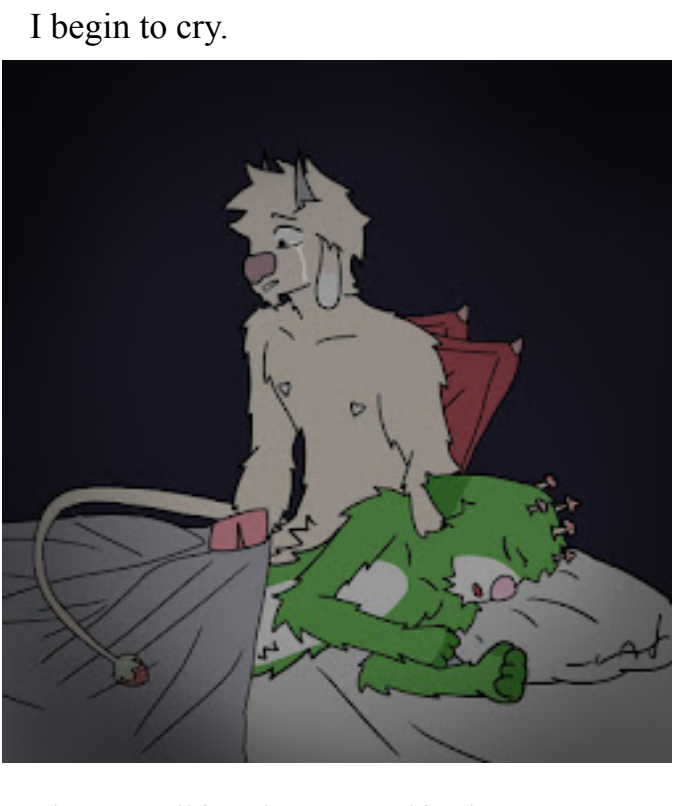
Fuck!

I turn back to Sprout and notice his facial expression. He is tense. I notice how his fur hasn't grown around his eyes. So he hasn't cried. I am shocked to be honest. Usually in that situation, he would be crying until it makes a river.

Was he forcing himself not to cry?

I then sit in the bed, facing forward. I don't know what to do. What was done, can't be undone. It's all my fault. I should've tried harder not to let Sour Puss take over.

I begin to cry.



I hate my life. I hate myself. I hate Sour Puss. I hate all these stupid demons. I hate that I was so stupid to fall for Sour Puss' tricks.

I just want to die. I want to kill myself, but I can't.

I really would hang myself right now, but I literally can't die. No matter what I try, I can't. I could use a gun, I could use a rope, I could use fire, but it would only hurt me.

As a demon, I can bleed and feel pain, but I heal so fast that it stops me from dying. No matter how much I get beat up or bruised, I will survive.

Even Sour Puss could beat me up, but it wouldn't kill me. The only way for him to kill me is if he used his claws into my heart.

Not like I have a heart though. If I did, I would've been able to stop Sour Puss from hurting Sprout. Now Sprout will think of me as a horrible friend. He won't even want to be friends anymore. He was so happy and he was doing so well to recover from his past, but I had to screw it up.

I can't just blame Sour Puss for this. Even if it was him, I still gave up on stopping him. I just watched him hurt Sprout. I should've kept trying. I should've done more to stop Sour Puss, but no. I just gave up halfway through.

Fuck you, Otis.

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Breaking Point (Sprout's POV)

I start to wake up. I have my eyes still closed. I can feel the covers on my legs and lower body. I feel that my top half is exposed. I start to open my eyes. I don't move. I look around, but all I see is the wall. There are some scratches on it, from claws.

What happened?

I can't quite remember what happened last night. I try to recall it. I remember I was walking out of the bathroom to help Otis cut his fur, but I couldn't find him. I looked around for him, but still couldn't find him.

Then I heard him scream from the closet for me to run away. I was confused and thought he was making a joke, but he sounded terrified. I got closer to the closet to try and hear him better. He kept begging for me to run away and stay as far as I could from him.

Then, I saw the same pink light on the floor. It was peeking through from under the door. I was wondering why it was there. I was thinking that it was Venus again, but then Otis opened the door.

He was acting weird. He was asking weird questions and he was glowing. He wasn't acting like himself. He got closer and closer to me. I didn't know what he was doing. So I was backing away, keeping my distance.

I asked him what he was doing and why he was glowing, but he just kept inching closer to me. I got really scared, then I accidentally tripped on my own tail. I fell onto the bed and then went into a panic.

I remember what happened,

He..he.. hurt me. He promised me he wouldn't. When I first met him, he promised. It's been a year. Why now? Why would he break his promise?

He is just like Noah.

I thought I could trust him. I thought he was my friend. My best friend.

I then start to sit up and turn to my right. Otis is sitting on the bed. He isn't moving. He is just staring at the wall in front of the bed.

"Otis?" I whisper.

He doesn't answer. He doesn't even flinch. He is frozen. I then try again.

"Otis, can you hear me?" I ask again.

Nothing.

I then give up. I don't even know why I even try to talk to him. Why would I want to after what he did? I then swing my legs over the edge of the bed. I grab the covers and wrap them around myself. I stand up from the bed and start to walk around the bed.

"Sprout?" I hear Otis.

I turn to Otis and see him staring at me. He has tears in his eyes.

Why is he crying? I should be the one crying.

I forced myself not to cry that whole night. I refused. I didn't want to be sad. I don't want to be sad. I want to be happy.

"Sprout.. I'm so..sorry.." Otis' voice is shaky.

He can't be serious right now.

"Sorry? You're sorry? No. I'm sorry that I didn't give you what you wanted in the first place." I sigh.

I continue to walk with the blanket around me. I grab my clothes from the edge of the bed and walk toward the bathroom.

"Sprout.. you have no reason to be sorry. I do." Otis says.

"I don't want to hear it right now, Otis." I sigh.

"I really am though.. But I promise that I didn't mean to."

"Otis. Stop."

"Sprout, it wasn't me. It was-"

It wasn't you?

"Otis! Stop!" I snap at him.

I turn to face him. He is sitting on the edge of the bed with his legs off the side. He isn't wearing anything.

"Sprout, I need to explain to you what happened-" Otis tries to talk again.

"What is there to explain? You just tried to say that it wasn't you." I grumble, "Who could have done it? I don't see anyone else here in this room. I was there, you know."

Otis is silent. I notice his wings are tucked and his tail is still. I also notice that he isn't glowing anymore. His horns are back to normal, too.

"I know that it sounds crazy, but I need to tell you something very important." He tries to explain.

"Otis! Stop! I don't want to hear any more excuses and lies!" I cry out, "I trusted you! I really did! You promised me that you wouldn't ever hurt me. But it took you a year to break that promise? Dammit."

"Sprout, just let me explain! Remember when I had you tell Venus what happened with you and Noah? Well, I also promised that I would tell you the reason later on. I think now is the time." He says.

"What is the reason then? So you two could laugh about it behind my back? So you can take inspiration from Noah? You made me feel safe, but it was all a lie. You were toying with me, weren't you?" I can feel my voice start to break.

"No! Sprout! I-"

"Stop calling me 'Sprout!' Last night you called me, 'Wyatt.' What is the difference now?"

"It wasn't me who called you that! It wasn't me who hurt you!"

I can feel a sharp pain in the head. My stomach starts to ache. It feels similar to the other feeling. But that feeling felt good. This feeling hurts. I want it to stop.

"Who was it?! Otis! Go on and tell me! Was it the delivery boy?!" I scream.

"It was Sour Puss!" Otis shouts.

"Who the hell is Sour Puss?!" I scream.

Otis then stands up from the bed and walks closer to me. I flinch slightly, but stand my ground.

"Sprout, I am a demon. So is Venus. Sour Puss is our boss and-" Otis tries to explain.

"Demons? Boss? You are working for some guy to do what? To rape me?"

"No! Well, yes. We used to. But Venus and I have changed!"

Changed?

I can feel my anger build up. I not only feel anger, but I feel betrayed, hurt, broken.

"Changed?! From what I can tell, you have not changed a bit! You just forced me to have sex with you last night!" I scream.

"It wasn't me! Sour Puss took control over my body and did it!" Otis shouts.

"This is insane to me! None of this makes sense! You are just lying to get me to forgive you! But I'm done forgiving people! I'm done doing as I'm told! I am my own person! Don't ever talk to me again!" I demand.

I then try to go to the bathroom to get changed into clothes. But I suddenly feel Otis tug on the blanket. I turn and see him stepping on the dragging covers.

"Sprout! You have to listen to me! Ever since I met you, I have been trying to change the demon world! I wanted you to tell Venus your trauma so she can change, too! I have been fighting Sour Puss for you and all the other mortals to save you from more trauma!" He exclaims.

"There's more?! How many *mortals* have you raped?!" I scream.

"I'm not proud of my actions, but I'm trying to make a change! I'm trying to explain to you what my life is like!"

"I don't want to hear it! You think your life is worse than mine?! I have been abused, used, and lied to!" I cry out.

I can see Otis' face change. He goes from a sorry and shameful look to an angry and annoyed look.

"I have been an amazing friend to you! I was there for you when you needed someone! I was there to fight for you! I made you feel safe! But all you ever did was complain about how bad your life is!" Otis screams.

"That's not all I did! I was thankful and grateful! But I needed to vent every so often!" I shout.

"You never even asked about how my life is! I was suffering, having to be bossed around without a choice! I tried to make a change in my life, but all you did was vent to me about how your life sucks! You never did check up on me!" Otis exclaims.

"But I did! I may not have asked directly how your life is going, but I was always making sure you were okay! I was there to check up on you! I was too scared to get into your business because I didn't want to be nosy!" I explain.

"Since when did you know how to stick up for yourself?! You act so scared and shy all the time! Is it all an act to get someone to sympathise for you?! You want me to feel bad for you?! I do feel bad for you! I can't believe you! Always an attention seeker!" He roars.

My head starts to ache even more. The pain keeps growing and intensifying. My paws start to sting, too.

"I'm not trying to gain attention! I'm trying to find someone I can trust! Someone I can talk to about my feelings! Someone to love me for who I am! My parents hated me! They hated each other! Then when I finally thought I found someone to love me, he used me for his own pleasure! Then you came along and did the exact same thing!" I cry out.

I can feel tears start to build up in my eyes. I don't want to cry. I don't want to yell. I want to be happy. That's all I want.

"Sprout.." A deep voice whispers.

I hear the voice again. My mind..it's talking to me again. Why now? Why at this moment?

"You know what you want to do.." He whispers again.

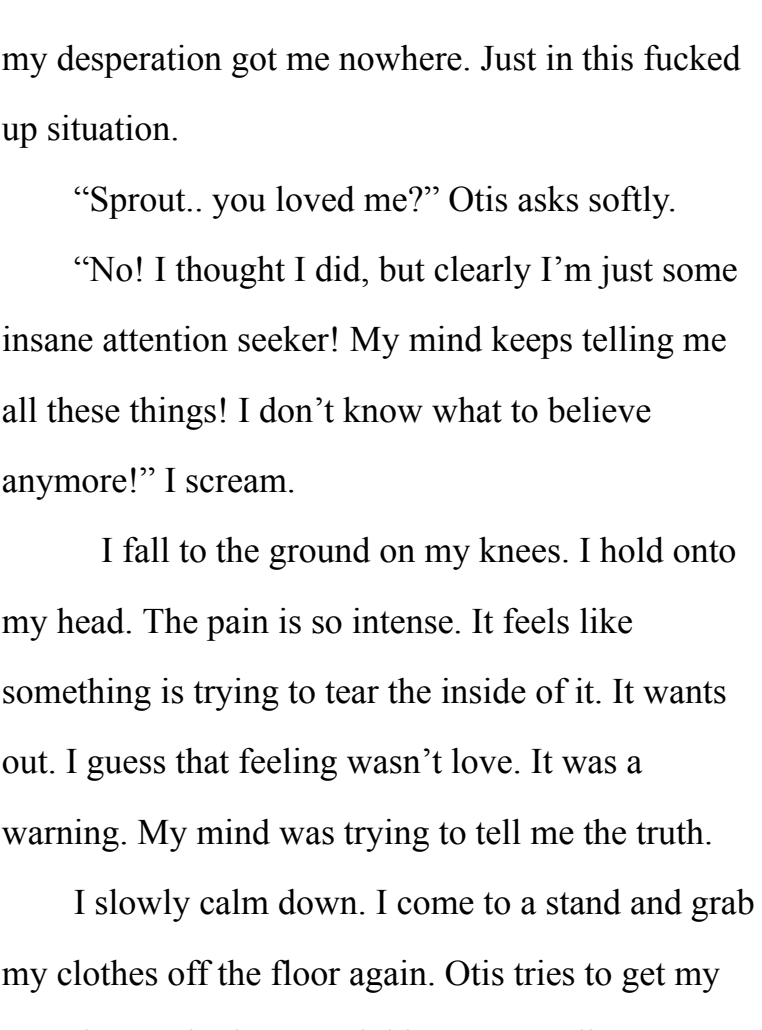
"I already told you, Sprout! It wasn't me! It was Sour Puss!" Otis screams.

I start to get overwhelmed. My head keeps aching and throbbing. I shake my head to make it stop. My paws are growing in pain as well. I start to get overheated and throw off the blanket to cool down.

"No! You are just like Noah! You are a horrible person! I thought you were the best person in my life! You made me feel a feeling I couldn't describe! I've never felt it before, but I never knew what it was called!" I pause.

"What feeling..?" Otis lowers his voice.

"I really thought I loved you! But boy was I wrong! So fucking wrong!" I cry out.



"You knew what would happen.. Why would you trust him?" The voice asks softly.

I don't know..

I guess I was just so desperate to find someone to trust. I didn't want to be alone. I wanted someone to care about me. I wanted someone to care for. But my desperation got me nowhere. Just in this fucked up situation.

"Sprout.. you loved me?" Otis asks softly.

"No! I thought I did, but clearly I'm just some insane attention seeker! My mind keeps telling me all these things! I don't know what to believe anymore!" I scream.

I fall to the ground on my knees. I hold onto my head. The pain is so intense. It feels like something is trying to tear the inside of it. It wants out. I guess that feeling wasn't love. It was a warning. My mind was trying to tell me the truth.

I slowly calm down. I come to a stand and grab my clothes off the floor again. Otis tries to get my attention again, but I push him away. I slip on my button up shirt and button it up. Then slide on my vest. I then snatch Otis' sweater and throw it to him.

"I don't ever want to see you again..and put on some clothes, you bastard." I grumble as I walk toward the motel room door.

Otis then slips on his sweater. He takes a step closer toward me.

"Sprout, I promise you.. I didn't mean for any of this to happen.. I was so scared to tell you about me being a demon because I didn't want to scare you." Otis tries to explain himself again.

"Stop talking. I don't know how many times I have to say it." I grumble.

"Sprout.. he deserves it.." The voice whispers.

"I'm not going to hurt him! Stop telling me to! Just because he's a dick, doesn't mean I will be a dick, too!" I scream at the voice.

"Who are you talking to?" Otis asks.

I take a deep breath.

"No one.." I sigh.

"Sprout, please just listen to me. I'm so incredibly sorry for everything. I just wanted to make a change in my life ever since I met you." Otis says.

"If you don't shut the fuck up-!" I snap at him.

I then turn back toward the door and continue to leave, but then Otis suddenly grabs me.

"Sprout! Please listen to me! I don't know what I would do without you! Because of you, I am a different person! I have changed because of you! I'm a better person now!" He cries out.

He continues to hold onto me and tugs. I turn to him and see him crying.

"If you don't let me go right now!" I shout.

"Please don't leave me! I'm begging you!" He is balling his eyes out.

"And you called me desperate? This is pathetic..especially for you, Otis." I then shove him off of me. He lands on the floor with a thud.

"Sprout! You have to listen to me!" Otis cries.

"SHUT THE FUCK UP!!" I scream.

"Do it. Do it. Do it!" The voice starts pounding in my mind.

"Stop it! Stop! No! I won't!" I scream at the voice.

"Do it! Right now! Do it! Do it! Do it!" It demands.

It screams at me over and over again. Non-stop. I can feel my head burning. My lungs feel like they are going to explode. I can't control my breath.

I look down at my paws and see… hands. There are huge nails growing from the fingertips. The nails are similar to my mushroom pattern.

"Do it! Do it! Do it! Kill him!!" The voice roars.

"NO! I WON'T!! STOP IT!" I cry out.

I look down at my body and see my shirt start to unbutton at the top. My chest feels like it's growing. My spine starts to ache. I fall forward from the excruciating pain. I cry out from the intensity.

"AUGHH!! STOP IT!!" I cry out.

"If you won't do it.. I will.." The voice chuckles deeply.

"Sprout! Are you okay?! What's happening to you?!" Otis screams.

I quickly look up and see Otis leaning against the wall. He is shaking in fear. His eyes are wide and his face is horrified.

"I don't know! I want it to stop! Otis! Help me!" I cry.

I am in panic mode and don't know what to do. I reach out for his hoof, but I see my hands turn black. My whole body is fading into a dark substance. Not even a substance, just darkness.

"My turn!!" The voice laughs.

The pain grows and grows until I can't even feel it anymore. I try to run to the bathroom, but I can't move. I can see my body moving around, but I'm not the one controlling it.

What is happening to me?!

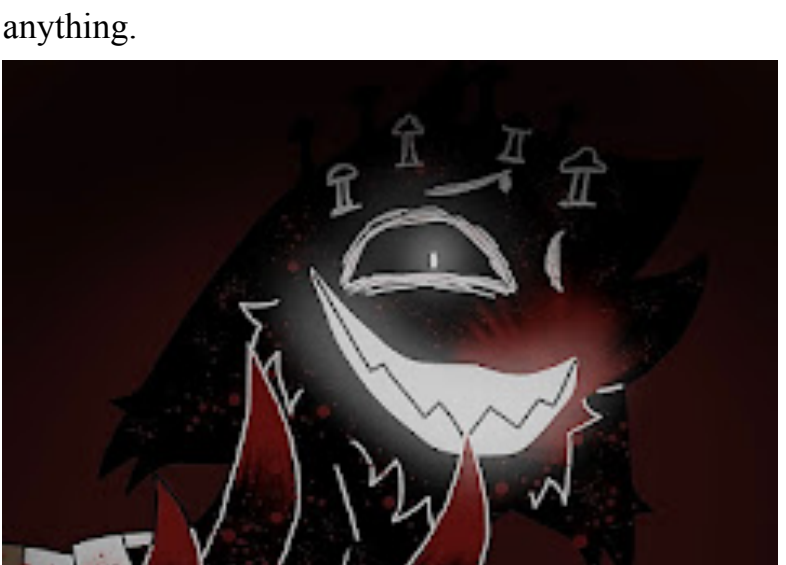
"Hello, Otis. I have been waiting a long time to do this.." The voice chuckles.

"W-who are y-you?" Otis' voice is shaky.

Otis is on the ground, trembling.

"Say 'Hello' to your worst nightmare!" The voice roars.

Then everything goes dark. I can't see anything.



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I slowly gain consciousness. I feel a lot of pain in my body. Mainly in my chest, head, and hands.

Hands..

I'm supposed to have paws. Why do I have hands? I then remember.

"Otis!" I cry out.

I open my eyes and start to look around the room. Everything is still blurry. I am just now waking up, so I would expect that to happen. I feel a sharp ache in my head again. I quickly grab my scalp and hold on, trying to stop the pain.

I groan from the pain. I feel my mushrooms. Some are broken. I look down at my hands and see that my normal fur color is back, but I still have hands and long nails.

I start to gain my vision again. I begin looking around the room again, searching for Otis. I know that we were arguing about how much I hate him, but I still have this feeling. I still feel like I care. I may think that I don't, but I think I do.

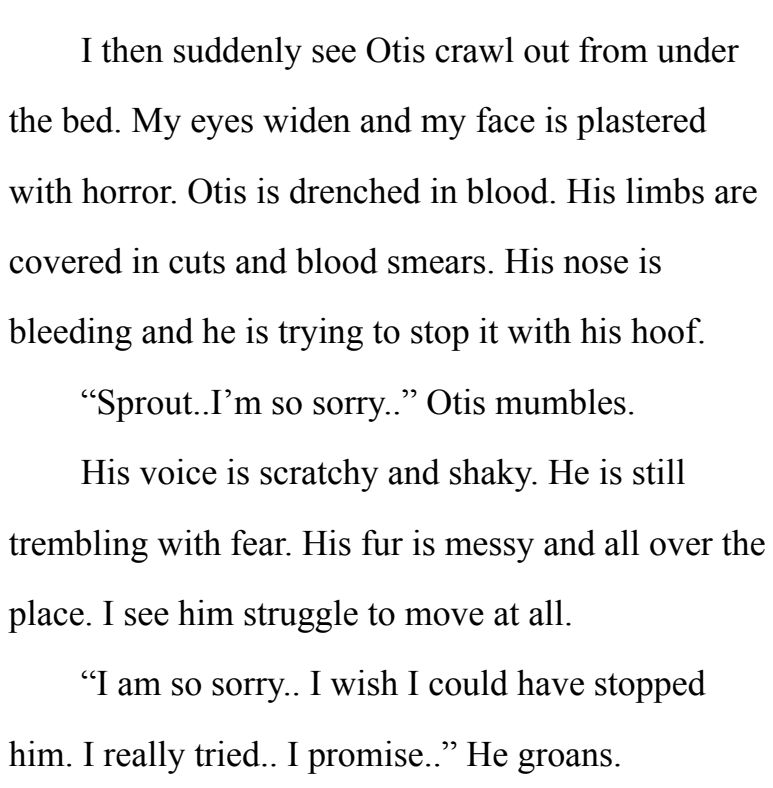
"Otis! Where are you?!" I cry out.

I then suddenly see Otis crawl out from under the bed. My eyes widen and my face is plastered with horror. Otis is drenched in blood. His limbs are covered in cuts and blood smears. His nose is bleeding and he is trying to stop it with his hoof.

"Sprout..I'm so sorry.." Otis mumbles.

His voice is scratchy and shaky. He is still trembling with fear. His fur is messy and all over the place. I see him struggle to move at all.

"I am so sorry.. I wish I could have stopped him. I really tried.. I promise.." He groans.



"Stop moving!" I cry out, "You will get even more hurt!"

He looks horrified. He is still shaking with fear. I don't even know how to describe what I'm feeling.

"This is all my fault! I'm so sorry! I should've believed you at the start! None of this would've happened if I just listened to you!" I start to cry.

I tried so hard not to cry for a long time, but I guess this was my breaking point. Seeing the most important person in my life on the floor, bleeding out.

I try to reach over to help Otis up so I can get him to a hospital, but when I get close, he flinches and ducks under his arms. His reaction is more dramatic than mine.

"What have I done?!" I cry out.

Otis is.. scared of me..

"Otis, I'm so sorry! I didn't mean to! I- I- I'm so sorry!!" I scream.

I've never felt so broken in life. I thought my life was the worst. I thought it couldn't get any worse. I had a horrible home life, I had horrible friends, I lost my trust, I thought I had it the worst.

I was hurt by others. But now I know that nothing hurts more than hurting someone else.

"It had to be done, Sprout." The voice whispers.

"Leave me alone!! This is all your fault!!" I cry out.

No. This is my fault.

"Sprout, I'm going to be okay.." Otis mumbles.

"No! No! I have to get you to a hospital! Please let me carry you to the urgent care down the street! I promise I won't hurt you this time!" I can feel the tears roll down my cheeks.

"Sprout.. I'm a demon. I can't die to a mortal.. I'll heal eventually.." Otis assures me softly.

Otis then lays his head down. He takes a deep breath and then passes out.

"Otis?! Otis!!" I cry.

"It needed to be done.." The voice whispers.

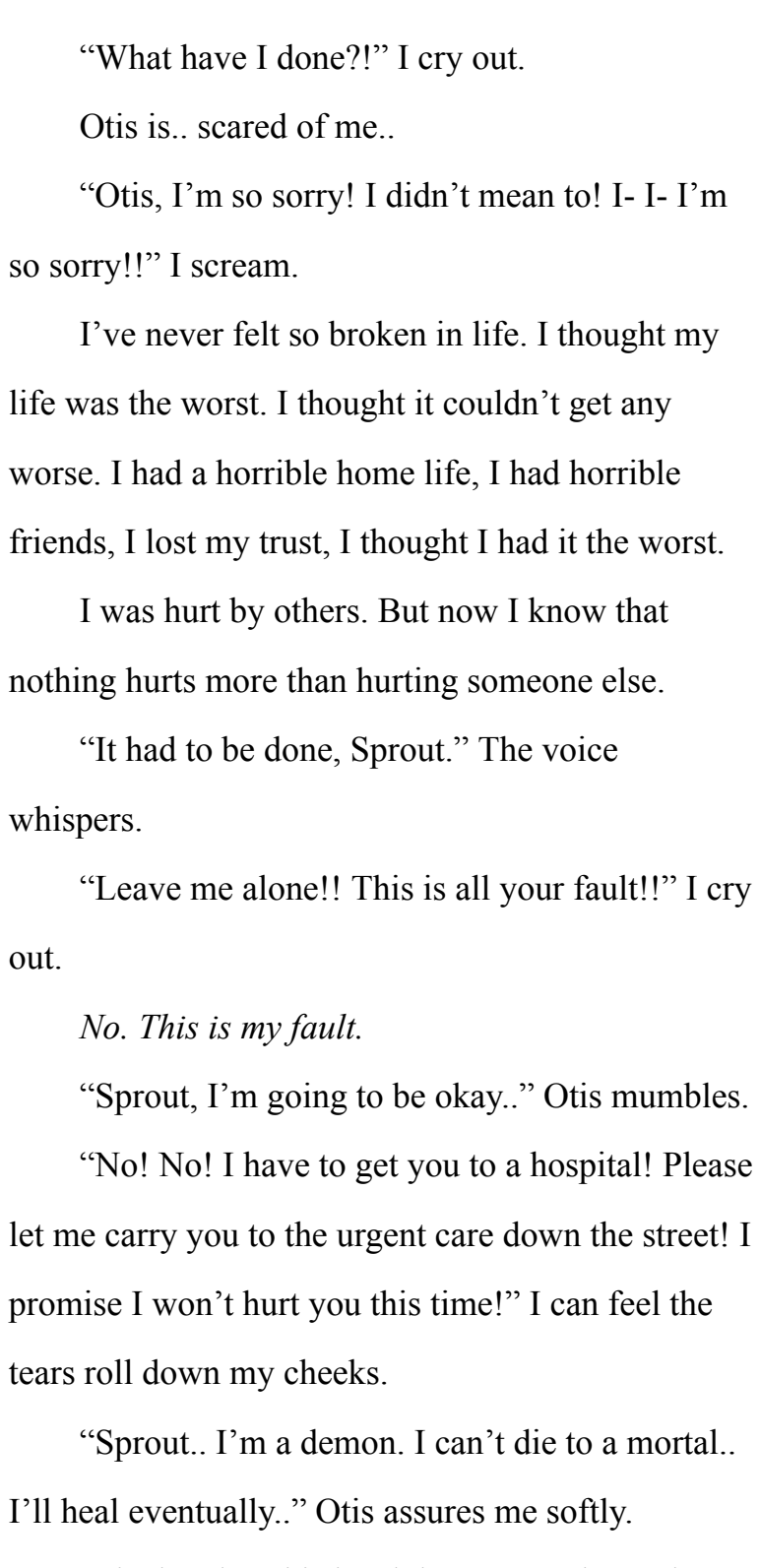
"No! No! It didn't! I can't live without him! He is the most important person to me! Please! No!" I scream.

I get closer to Otis and try to wake him up. He doesn't budge.

"Otis! Please get up! I can't live without you!" I can't stop crying.

"I think I did it!" The voice laughs.

"I think I killed him!" I cry out.



The emotional pain is the worst feeling I've ever felt. I have been beaten, cut, punched, kicked, smacked. I could've died from the pain I was in. In fact my parents tried to kill me, but I never did die.

But none of that can compare to this intense feeling of guilt. The pain of knowing that my best friend's death is because of me.

"I'm so sorry, Otis!" I fall to the ground and cry my eyes out.

I can hear the voice chuckling and laughing in the back of my mind.

How can it be enjoying this?? Why is this funny to it?

"Shut up! Just for a minute! Can't you see that I didn't want this?!" I cry as I fall onto Otis.

"But you did, Sprout! You did this! Aren't you proud of yourself?" The voice laughs.

"I did not do this! You did! I had no control over my own body! You did this!" I sob.

"But I am just your mind. I cannot make you do anything."

"I don't even know what you are! You are not my mind! I control what I think! Who are you?! Actually?!"

"You already know. I am your conscience. I tell you what you truly want deep down."

"Liar! Who are you?! And why are you doing this?! How are you in my head?!" I demand an answer.

"You don't have to believe the truth. Just enjoy what was done." The voice fades into silence.

I sit there crying on top of Otis. I can feel my body slowly shrinking back to its normal size. It hurts, but I ignore it. I can't stop crying. My eyes sting from all the tears.

I can feel my fur growing around my eyes. I cannot see anymore. The moss continues to grow around my face, restricting my sight.

I then pull myself up and sit on my knees. I grab Otis and pull him closer. I lay his head down gently onto my legs. His body rests on my thighs with his eyes closed. His body is still and numb. The blood is smeared all over our clothes and fur. The splatters cover every inch of our bodies. Both of us are drenched in the dark red ooze.

I'm so sorry..

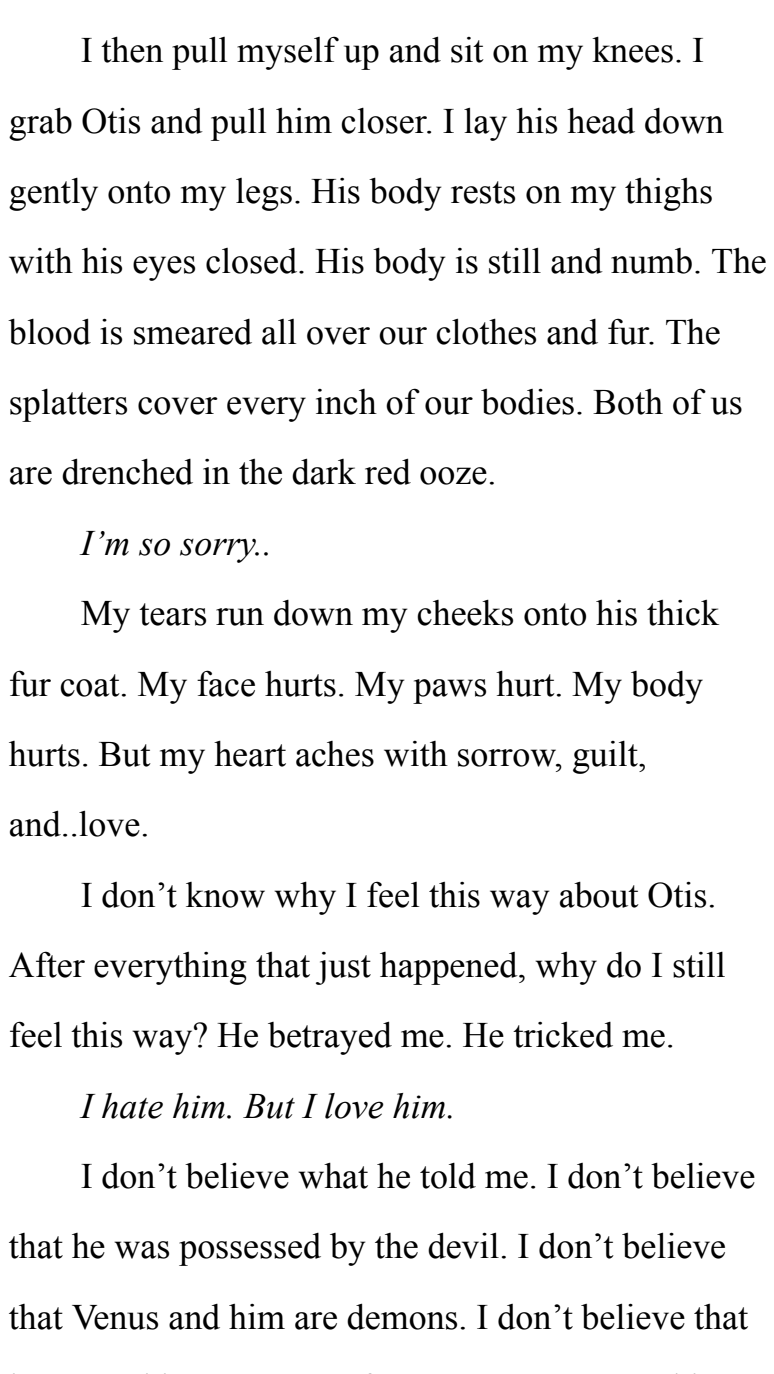
My tears run down my cheeks onto his thick fur coat. My face hurts. My paws hurt. My body hurts. But my heart aches with sorrow, guilt, and..love.

I don't know why I feel this way about Otis. After everything that just happened, why do I still feel this way? He betrayed me. He tricked me.

I hate him. But I love him.

I don't believe what he told me. I don't believe that he was possessed by the devil. I don't believe that Venus and him are demons. I don't believe that it wasn't him. But part of me wants to. I want him to be the good guy. I want to believe that he was telling the truth.

Please, Otis.. Please be telling the truth. I want to trust you.



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I open my eyes and see my overgrown fur. I sit up from Otis' body. I use my paw to move the fur out of my eyes temporarily. I see Otis still on the floor, drenched in blood.

I must've cried myself to sleep.

I notice that I'm not crying anymore. I must've run out of tears from all that sobbing.

I then suddenly see a bright pink light appear. It's Venus' orb. I watch the orb circle around Otis and I. It then comes down to the floor beside me. Venus then appears.

"What.. happened..?" Venus asks me.

I don't answer. I don't know what to tell her. But I do have a lot of questions for her.

"Are you a demon?" I ask, still staring down at Otis.

"A demon?" Venus is confused.

"Otis was telling me about how you and him are demons. Is that true?" I ask, looking up at her.

"Well.. yeah. We are. But what in Hell happened here?" She responds.

I don't know how to explain everything. I know that I will break down crying again.

"Otis..raped me last night.. He claimed that it wasn't him and it was the devil, Sour puss.." I explain, "I felt betrayed and like I was being lied to. I felt like I lost his trust."

I pause and take a breath to try and keep myself calm.

"I can't remember every detail, but Otis and I got into a huge argument. Everything escalated so fast. I got into a panic and then I heard the voice come back." I continue.

Venus is listening very carefully to every word.

"The voice?" She asks.

"The day that I ran away from Noah, that's when I first heard the voice. I ran away because a voice kept telling me to do horrible things to the ones who hurt me. It claimed that it was my mind and my conscience." I explain, "The voice is what made me go into a panic and then I tried to run away from it, but I also ran to get away from Noah. I haven't heard the voice in a year until early this morning."

"That sounds scary. I'm so sorry about that, hon." Venus says softly.

"When Otis and I were arguing, the voice came back and kept telling me to hurt Otis. I didn't want to. I didn't mean to.. I tried to stop.. But then.. I.." I start to breathe heavily.

Venus then places her paw on my shoulder.

"You transformed? You grew big claws and you doubled in size?" Venus asks.

"Yes.. How did you-"

"I saw you transform that day when you were venting to Otis and I. I am assuming that any trauma of yours triggers it." She explains.

I don't know how to react. She knew about this all this time and didn't say anything?

"W-what did I look like?" I ask.

"You looked pretty much the same, but you were bigger and had big claws. Does that sound the same to how it was just a bit ago?" She responds.

"I remember turning into some sort of black substance. I also had.. hands rather than paws." I explain.

Venus looks surprised.

"That sounds quite different compared to what I saw. I'm sorry that you had to experience that." She whispers.

I look back down at Otis. I still can't see much because of the overgrown fur and moss.

"So.. it was you who did this?" Venus asks.

"I really tried to stop it. It was like I had no control over my own body. It was the voice that did it." I explain.

Venus is silent for a moment.

"Well, don't feel like it's your fault. I know it sounds crazy and all, but Otis was telling the truth. Sour Puss is the nickname for the Devil, our boss. I know that was a really scary thing to experience. Especially because it seemed like it was Otis. But I promise you.. he was doing everything he could to stop Sour Puss." She explains.

I want to believe her, but something in my gut is telling me that it's all a lie.

I stay still, keeping my eyes on Otis. I don't know how to feel.

"Sprout, I can promise you that he's alive. We demons can't die. Not by a mortal. Only the Devil can kill us." Venus explains.

"That's what Otis said. But I don't know if I believe that. Look what I have done... How would it be possible to survive that?" I ask.

Venus is quiet for a moment.

"I have an idea. Might be risky though." She says, "I could bring you and Otis to Hell with me. I will show you what it's like there and I think it would help you better understand what happened with Otis. I can even explain to you what Otis did for you on the way there."

I freeze from her words. Go to Hell? Go where there are more demons?

"Wouldn't that be dangerous for me? I'm a mortal." I ask.

"Well I look like a mortal, right?" Venus asks.

"Uh.. yeah?"

"Then how could they tell that you're a mortal? Plus if you transform again, you will look like a really powerful demon. No one will want to mess with you." Venus explains.

"That's true.." I sigh.

I keep my head down, still unsure about it. I'm just so scared for Otis. What if he doesn't live?

No. I will force myself to believe that he will live.

"It's up to you, Sprout. But either way, I will be taking Otis with me. Demons heal faster in Hell." Venus says.

I then adjust myself into a squatting position and grab hold of Otis. I slowly stand up, pulling up Otis.

"Let's go." I say with determination.

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Narrator:

Venus then opened up a portal for them all to go through. The travel time took longer because of the amount of people going through at once.

On the way there, Venus explained everything that Otis went through to try and stop Sour Puss. She told him about how Otis' task was originally to rape Sprout when they first met. But how Otis had a change of heart when Sprout vented for the first time.

She explained the pain and suffering Otis went through while he faced the Devil. She also further explained how she was forced into locking up Otis, but also had a change of heart due to her relation to Sprout. She could understand a little bit of what Sprout feels since she is used to being treated like an object in Hell by other demons.

—--

"Just a few tips before we get there.." Venus says, "One: Don't act too shy. Try to stand your ground. Two: If someone starts flirting with you or tries to touch you, just call me over. I will try to stay by your side. Three: Don't be surprised to see a lot of demons without clothes. It's normal for Succubus and Incubus demons. Four: If anyone asks what species of demon you are, just say you're a possessive demon, like me."

I nod and agree to follow the tips. I want to blend in as much as I can. I would hate to be caught as a mortal. What would even happen if they found out that I'm a mortal?

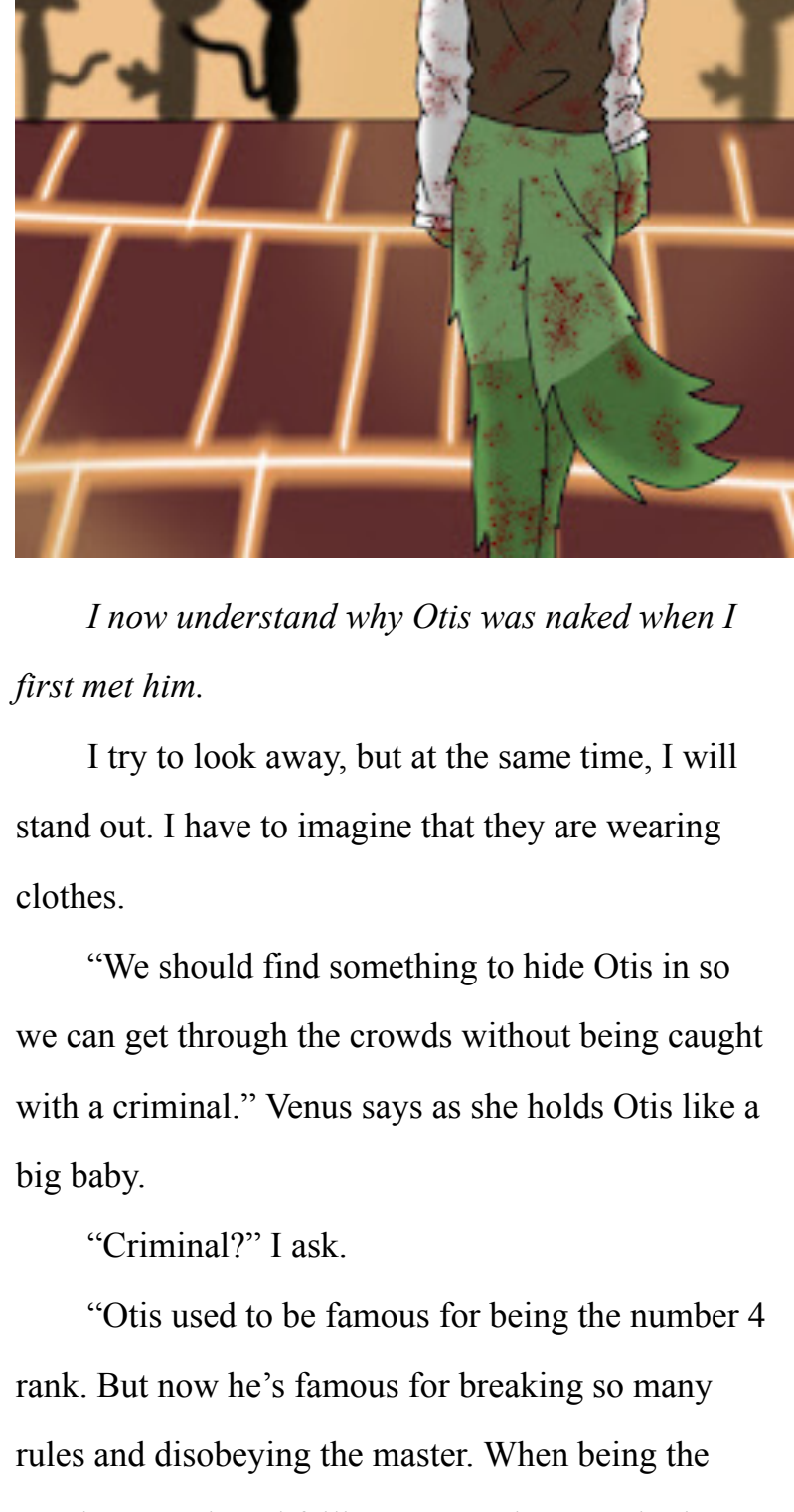
We then make it to the end of the portal. I can feel a big wave of heat push against my body. A bright light shines onto my face. Venus takes a step forward and passes through the portal. I do the same.

I quickly close my eyes from the bright light.

"Here, I'll take Otis. He is probably really heavy for you." Venus says as she takes Otis from my arms.

"Thanks."

I slowly open my eyes to adjust to the lighting. I see a huge space full of demons. The floors are red brick with lava in the cracks. I can't see any walls nearby because the room is so large. There are so many demons. I can see felines, canines, birds, lizards, and tons more. I notice how some aren't wearing any clothes.



I now understand why Otis was naked when I first met him.

I try to look away, but at the same time, I will stand out. I have to imagine that they are wearing clothes.

"We should find something to hide Otis in so we can get through the crowds without being caught with a criminal." Venus says as she holds Otis like a big baby.

"Criminal?" I ask.

"Otis used to be famous for being the number 4 rank. But now he's famous for breaking so many rules and disobeying the master. When being the number 4 rank and failing to complete a task, that can definitely make you well known around here." She explains.

"Oh. So he would be easy to recognize?" I ask.

"Precisely."

"I see. What should we hide him in?" I ask.

"I can try to find a trash bag or a big blanket." Venus says.

I nod in agreement. Venus then takes Otis and I to a nearby bench.

"Just sit here with Otis and keep his face covered. I'll be right back." Venus says.

Venus then floats away into the distance. I sit with Otis' head in my lap. His face is turned to my torso and the side of his head lays on my thighs. His whole body is still covered in blood. So is mine.

Otis wasn't lying.

I can now see that Venus and Otis were telling

I can now see that Venus and Otis were telling the truth. They are demons. They are in a world where it's normal to be evil. I can't even imagine growing up thinking it's okay to hurt others. Not only are they taught that it's okay, they are specifically trained for it.

I then look back down at Otis and see his cuts from my claws. They still look very deep and irritated. As I stare at them, I start to see them slowly close up. The bleeding stops and the wounds start to heal.

Thank goodness.

I let out a sigh of relief. I was doubting that he was going to live. But I'm glad he's okay. I then look up and lean my head back.

"Hey, little guy. What's a cutie like you sitting here by yourself?" I hear a deep voice.

I lean up to see who it is. It's a chubby orange cat. His tail has a block of cheese on the tip. He has some cheese shreds in his fur. I also notice that he's not wearing anything.

"I-I'm not alone. I'm with my friend here." I point to Otis.

Stand your ground. Don't act shy. Stand your ground.

"Is this your boyfriend?" The big cat asks.

"No. He's just my friend." I reply.

"What's his name?" He asks.

I pause for a moment, trying to think of another name. I can't say "Otis" or he will know who it is.

"Oscar." I say.

"Well.. if Oscar isn't your boyfriend, that means you're available, right?" He asks.

"Well.. I'm single, but I'm not interested."

I try to maintain eye contact with the chubby cat. I feel really uncomfortable with him standing so close without any clothes, but I have to act like it's normal.

"Aww.. why not? You're so damn cute and sexy. I will gladly show you what you're missing out on. Just give daddy a few minutes and you'll be in love." He smirks.

I can see drool pouring out of his mouth.

"Sorry, but you're not my type." I say.

"Not your type?! I will become your type! I am super good in bed!" He then inches closer to me.

I can feel myself go into a panic. I want to run off, but I have to blend in. What should I do?

I can see the demon start to touch himself in his lower area.

Disgusting.

I need Venus. But if I shout for her, he will think I'm being a wimp. I have to act tough and stand my ground like Venus said.

"By the looks of it, you don't look like you would be good in bed. You're already drooling all over yourself. I can see old food chunks in your saliva. Why would I sleep with you when you smell like a pot of rotting cheddar cheese that was soaked in a cup of vinegar? Your fur is all matted and dirty. It's even more dirty than your mind." I say, "But the fact that you are already touching yourself before you even got to me, shows a lot. You must be really lonely. You must be used to touching yourself when you're sad. I think you are getting your hopes up with me. No need to get so excited so fast."

His face immediately changes expressions. It goes from a lust and dirty look to an offended and raging look. He is furious from my words.

Maybe I went too far.

"The fuck did you just say to be, faggot?!" He removes his paw from his lower half and grabs my wrist.

"Did you just touch me with the same paw you used to masterbait?" I ask.

I can feel a sense of anger and disgust growing inside of me. My paws start to ache.

"You fucking, bastard.." I grumble, "That was probably the most disgusting thing you could have done. First you try to force me into having sex with you. Then you grab me with that filthy paw of yours? I have no idea where that tiny dick has been."

I can feel my spine start to crack and my claws start to grow.

I guess I am sick and tired of being used as an object and a sex machine. Even the littlest of things can set me off now.

"You better put that bone away or this dog is going to tear you to shreds.." I growl.

The demon's face goes from anger to terror. My body grows in size and my paws turn into hands. I gently scoot Otis to the side and I stand up from the bench.

"Look, dude.. I'm sorry. I-I was just k-kidding around.. It was a j-joke. Just a joke.." The demon wimpers.

I then grab him by the neck and lift him up to my face. I snarl and reveal my sharp teeth. The demon gasps for air, but chokes.

"I-I p-promise that I w-will l-leave y-y-you al-alone.." He gasps.

"Good. Now go." I then let go and drop him.

He hits the floor hard. I can hear some of his bones break upon impact. He scrambles to his feet and runs away.

I take a breath and try to calm down.

"Sprout!" I hear Venus from a distance.

I look up and see her flying toward me with a big blanket.

"You are huge! What happened?!" She lands on the ground next to me.

I take a few more breaths and start to shrink down to my normal size.

"Just some cheese cat demon dude. Trying to touch me, but I think I handled him well." I explain.

"I would say so! You stood up for yourself and that's amazing!" Venus congratulates me.

"Thanks." I chuckle nervously.

"Alright, let's go to my room and get both of you cleaned up. You look like you just had a murder fest." Venus pauses, "Well, that's actually pretty normal around here. I guess you're a killer demon now."

Venus then tosses the blanket onto Otis and puts him on her back.

"My room is this way." She says as she leads the way.

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Welcome Back (Otis' POV)

I can feel my body heat up. I am laying on something not so comfortable. Feels like a stiff mattress. I can feel a bit of weight on top of me. A blanket.

I start to move around a bit and slowly open my eyes. I can see the ceiling. It looks very familiar. It is red brick with lava in the cracks.

Fuck!

I realize that I'm back in Hell. Why, though? Did Sour Puss possess me again when I passed out?

"He's awake!" I can hear Venus.

I look to my left and see Venus looking down at me. She then takes off the blanket.

"I bet you're hot in that." She says.

I sit up and immediately snatch her, grasping her into a tight hug.

"You have no idea what it feels like to hear your voice." I cry, "I failed to stop Sour Puss. I tried. I really tried. But I hurt him.. I hurt Sprout."

Venus wraps her arms around me and holds me tightly. She uses one paw to stroke my head.

"I hurt him so much that he.. he transformed into.. a.. I don't know." I cry, "I will never be able to gain his trust again. I just wanted him to live a happy and safe life."

I then hear a small foot step from behind Venus. I slowly loosen my grip on Venus and look up. It's Sprout.

He is standing in the shadows, covered in blood splatters. He has a sorrowful look in his eyes. He sits still, staring at me. I instantly swing my legs off the bed and run over to him.

"Sprout! I'm so fucking sorry! I have no excuses! If you don't want to believe me, it's completely okay! You don't have to forgive me!" I cry out.

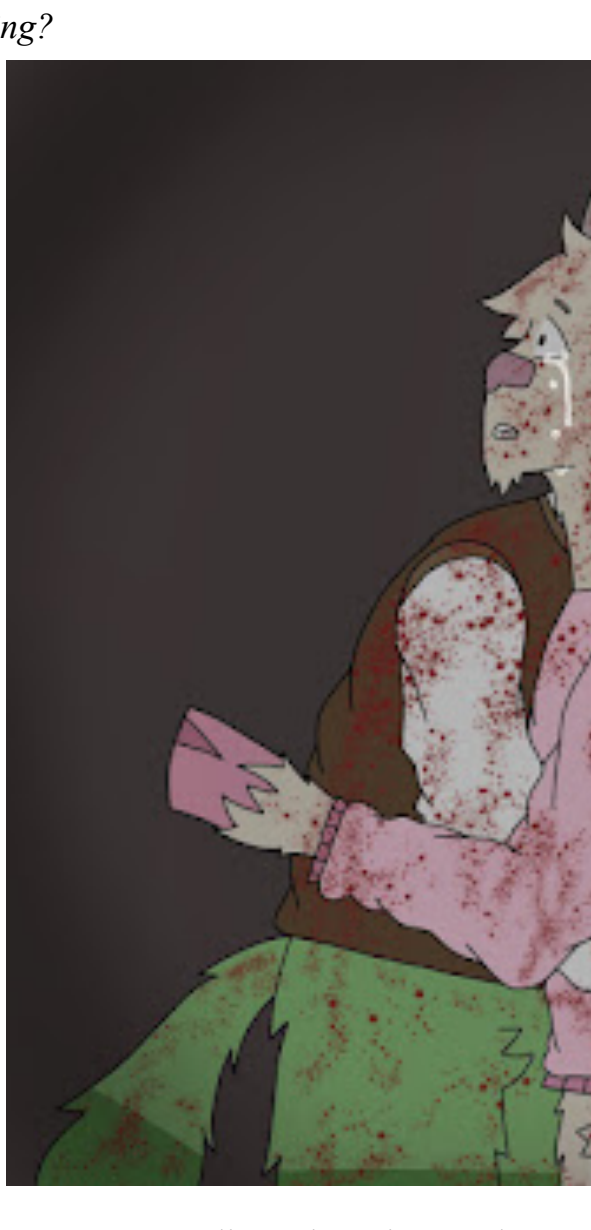
Tears are rolling down my face. Each individual tear plops onto the brick floors. Some hit the lava and sizzle.

As I am looking up at Sprout, I can see his eyes widen. He looks scared, but relieved. He then takes a step closer and falls onto me, wrapping himself around my body.

"I believe you, Otis. Venus explained everything." His voice starts to break, "I am so sorry for hurting you. I was a literal monster and could've killed you if it weren't for you being a demon."

Sprout tightens his grip. I am still for a moment. I am frozen from shock.

How could he be willing to even touch me after everything?



I am the worst person alive. I hurt thousands. I lied to him about everything. I was such a dick. I don't deserve forgiveness. I don't deserve friends. I don't deserve to even exist.

"W-why are y-you apologizing? You had every right to do what you did." I say with a shaky voice.

Sprout tightens his grip.

"Don't even. You may have done something to hurt me, but it was out of your control. You tried to explain to me what happened, but I didn't listen. I just lost my mind and somehow transformed into a horrifying beast." Sprout whispers.

I can feel his tears drip onto my shoulder. He sniffs his nose.

"But you also did that out of your control. You weren't even the one who did it. It was..the voice. Is that what you called it?" I ask.

"Doesn't matter. If I had just stayed calm and listened to you, none of this would've happened."

I immediately wrap my arms around Sprout. I squeeze tightly.

"Don't you ever blame yourself for what happened. I don't blame you for not listening to me. I probably wouldn't believe it either if I were a mortal." I say as I cry.

We then pull away from the hug and give one another a bit of space.

"I can see both of yalls points of view. I can see how Otis could have explained the situation better if he just gave you some space when you tried to walk away. I also see how Sprout could've handled his emotions better when triggered into his trauma." Venus jumps in, "But I am still confused about how Sprout can change into that form. I thought mortals had no power of any sort.

I pause and think for a moment. She's not wrong on both ends.

"How did you shift into that form? Mortals can't do that. Can they?" I ask.

"I can go look it up in the demon handguide about mortals." Venus says as she runs over to her desk.

"I am still pretty shaken up from all of it." Sprout says, "All I know is that while I was in that form, I couldn't control my body. But earlier when that incubus tried hitting on me, I could control what I was doing. I could even change back on command."

"That's really weird. I wonder why." I say.

Venus comes running over with her handbook.

"I found a tab about mortals." She says while flipping the pages.

I step closer to her and lean over her shoulder. I begin reading along with her.

"It says here that mortals cannot shift into any other species unless they have been through some sort of science experiment, gone through major surgery, or were born with mixed genetics." Venus reads out.

"I was raised in a home of poverty and abusive parents. My family wouldn't have been able to afford surgery." Sprout explains, "Plus, I don't think that my parents would have any contact with scientists."

"So it must be some sort of genetic issue or passed on power?" I ask.

"What species are your parents, Sprout?" Venus asks.

"Just some regular dogs. I don't know the exact breeds, but nothing that stands out. I'm not even sure how I got my mushrooms. But when I was living with Noah, we just assumed that my mother cheated on my father." Sprout explains.

"That could be the case. But what breed would be able to transform into some sort of deadly creature? Plus it has to include some sort of mushroom." I ask.

Sprout, Venus, and I all sit and ponder for a bit. I have no idea what it could be. I don't think there is a species with mushrooms and a transforming ability.

"I think there is only one species that could be possible." Venus says.

"What is it?" Sprout asks.

"Nevermind, that's impossible." Venus shuts down her idea.

"Venus, it's better to have one idea than no idea." I say.

Venus looks down at the book and then closes it. She looks back up and shares her thoughts.

"Well, I'm thinking that Sprout might be mixed with some sort of demon." Venus says.

"Demon?" I ask.

"I know, it's stupid. Incubi can't impregnate mortals, but I can't think of any other species that would transform." She says.

"Well, then it couldn't be a demon. It would be impossible, like you said." Sprout says.

I sit there and think. I can see where Venus is coming from, but it also doesn't make sense. Only incubi and Succubi are allowed to get intimate with mortals, but they can't impregnate each other.

I suddenly remember what that gate demon said a year ago.

"Venus, do you remember that gate demon from last year? He was saying something about a disobedient demon. He raped a mortal when he was a nightmare demon." I ask.

"Oh, yeah! I do! Didn't the demon end up impregnating a female mortal?" Venus asks.

"Yeah. The gate demon said that the offspring either died at birth because of the mixed genetics or it lived on." I say.

I notice that Sprout is quiet. He hasn't said a word to react to our conversation.

"Hey, are you okay?" I ask, slowly resting my hoove on his shoulder, trying to comfort him.

He suddenly flinches.

"Yeah, sorry. I am just now thinking about how this could link to me. What if I am the offspring of that demon? What if I am part demon? Is that why I go crazy and why I can transform?" Sprout asks.

I notice that his breath is increasing in speed. He is fidgeting with his paws and his legs are quivering.

"Hey, it's okay. Even if you are the kid of that demon, it doesn't change who you are as a person. You are still Sprout and you are still my friend." I assure him.

"I guess I'm just scared. What if I am supposed to do what the devil says? What if I have to start doing evil things like other demons?" Sprout's voice is shaky, yet soft.

"Well, even if you are part demon, you are still part mortal. Don't worry about that. Right now, we just need to get you out of Hell. Now that you're here, you might draw some attention if others find out that you're the lost child." Venus jumps in.

"You're right, Ve. Let's keep a low profile and get out of here. I believe that Sour Puss took my teleport power away, so we will have to sneak out." I explain.

"Alright, let's get out of here." Sprout says.

We all head for the door.

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Narrator:

Sprout and Otis got cleaned off before going back to the crowd. They don't want to draw attention with all the blood. Then they all start walking down the hallway of the bedrooms.

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Hello, Father (Sprout's POV)

Otis, Venus, and I are walking slowly down the hallway. It's very dark. All the walls are stone brick and magma.

My brain is still scattered from that whole situation. I started to think more and more about myself when Venus mentioned that I could be part demon. It doesn't make sense, but it also kind of does.

I remember how my parents tried to kill me multiple times, but couldn't. Demons aren't able to die. That could explain it. I also was able to control my insanity form in Hell, but not in my world. Is that why? Is it because I'm part demon?

Both Venus and Otis suddenly stop in the middle of the hallway. I go around them and take a look to find out why. There is a bright red light shining from a room. I notice how the room is different compared to Venus' room. Venus' room has a big wooden door. This room has big metal bars. It's like a prison cell.

I can hear some chuckling coming from the room. The voice is much deeper. I am assuming it's a man.

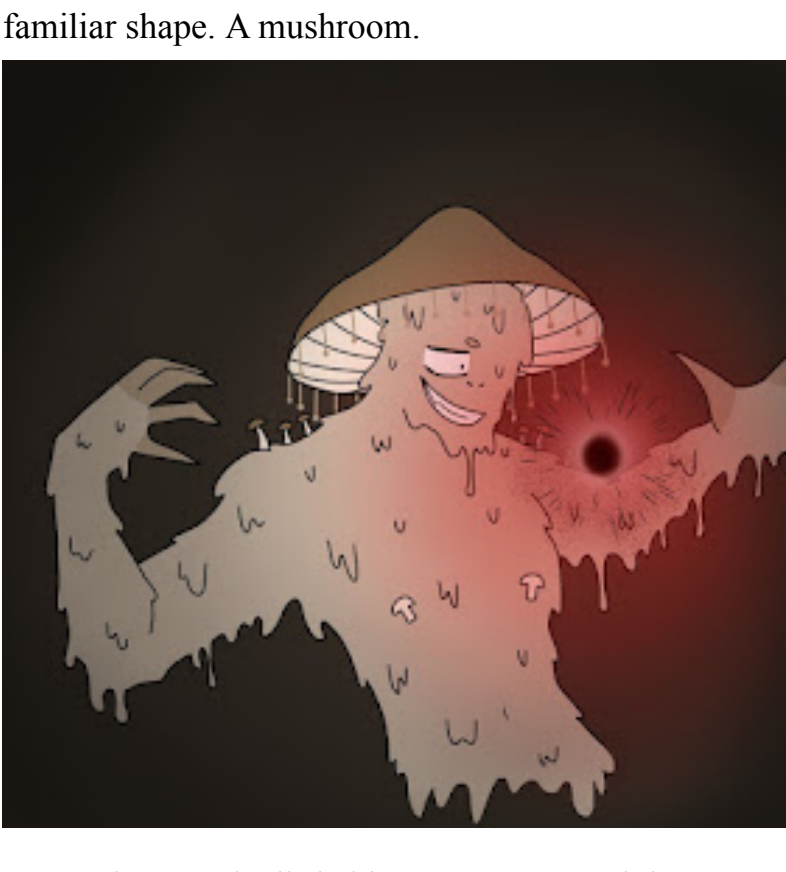
"I am doing it! Yes!" The voice laughs.

Otis grabs hold of my shoulder and pulls me closer. He is probably trying to protect me from whoever it is. That demon is in a cell for a reason.

"Let's just quickly sneak past." Venus whispers.

Otis and I nod in agreement. We slowly walk past the cell to get to the hallway exit. As we pass by, I peek into the cell. There is a light brown demon. He is holding some sort of red and black orb. From the light, I can only see a little bit of his body details.

He looks like he is dripping. As if he is a liquid. I can see him wearing a hat. It looks like a familiar shape. A mushroom.



"I just need a little bit more power and then I will be free!" The demon laughs.

He then starts looking around his cell and then looks out. He lifts his head and makes eye contact with me.

"Hey, you! What kind of demon are you? If you're a murder demon or a possessive demon, you could help me!" He asks with a deep voice.

I don't know how to respond. I think I am part demon, but I don't know for sure. Plus, I wouldn't know what kind of demon unless I could find my biological father.

"Sprout, let's keep walking. Just ignore him." Otis says.

"Demons in those cells are there for a reason." Venus adds.

I don't answer the demon and try to walk away.

"I can help you if you help me! I can tell that you're not from around here. You're not a demon, are you?" The cell demon asks.

I pause and look back at him.

"How can you tell?" I ask.

I can feel Otis try to lightly pull me back away

I can feel Otis try to lightly pull me back away from the cell.

"Well, you have those Amanita Muscaria mushrooms on your head. Every demon has a food related body detail. That cow looking one there has a strawberry tail." The demon points to Otis, "That little lady there appears to have a hot chocolate fur coat. I am mushroom stew. But the mushrooms on your head are highly poisonous."

I notice that the demon has small mushrooms growing from his shoulders. He has some sliced mushrooms for nipples. His big hat is a giant mushroom.

"Poisonous? How come your mushrooms are considered food?" I ask.

"Different mushrooms. Mine are button mushrooms. Mortals and demons can eat that species of mushroom. But if someone tries to eat yours, they will get extremely sick and possibly die." The demon explains.

I can feel Otis tug a little on me to get my attention. I look over at him.

"Sprout, we need to get back to leaving Hell." Otis whispers.

"I do have a question for you, Sprout." The demon says.

I turn back to him.

"If you aren't a demon, why are you in Hell? You are supposed to be in the mortal realm." He asks.

"Well, it's a long story.. But we believe that I am actually part demon. Have you ever heard of the demon that-" He interrupts me.

"The demon that was the nightmare demon, but did the job of an incubus and then managed to get a mortal pregnant. Now the offspring is running around somewhere in the mortal realm or it just died? Yes. I am that demon." He says.

I stand frozen. If he is the demon that raped a mortal, and I'm part demon, doesn't that make me… his son?

"Is that why you're in this cell?" I ask.

"Yeah.. I've been trying to get out for a while, but I need some sort of deathly demon to help me." He replies.

He starts to wave his hands around in the air and dances around the room.

"Oh, wait a minute! You said that you're part demon, right? You could be my son! That makes you part nightmare demon! You can help me out!" He exclaims.

"Sprout, we need to leave now." Venus says, grabbing my shoulder.

"We shouldn't help him. He is in there because of what he did." Otis adds.

I don't know how to feel at this moment. Everything is like a tornado of thoughts and memories.

My father was never my real father. My mother never cheated. What if my father thought she cheated and that's why he beat her along with me? They both hated me.

Is this why I have mushrooms on my head? Because this guy is my real father? Is this why I hear a voice in my head? Is this why I can transform into a shadow beast?

"Son, please help your papa out. I never meant anything by what I did. I just wanted to experience some fun! But if it weren't for me, you wouldn't be here! You can help me out as a thank you!" The demon tries to persuade me.

"I don't think I can help you. You are evil and cruel. Why do you even want out? What are your plans? Plus, we just met. I don't even know your name." I say.

"My apologies. Where are my manners? My name is Toad Stool. Nice to meet you. Now help me out!" He sounds very rushed.

"Sorry, sir, but I have to kindly decline. I just have to get out of here with my friends. I don't belong here." I start to walk away from the cell.

I can hear a sudden clang against the metal bars. I jump from the loud noise and quickly look back.

"Son! Help me out! I'm begging you!" He cries out.

"No. I have to go now." I can feel myself getting overwhelmed.

"No, you don't! You are a demon! You have no control over your power in the mortal realm! I bet you must've hurt someone badly before you got here, didn't you?" He says.

"H-how did you know?" I am extremely confused.

"I am the nightmare demon. I have the ability to sense someone's worst fear. I use that ability to find out one's fears and then make them suffer in their own mind! I make mortals go insane!" He starts laughing like crazy.

"Sprout, we seriously need to get away from this guy." Otis says. His voice is unsteady.

"This guy is a fucking phycopath!" Venus shouts.

"Look! I can show you! You, son, your worst fear is hurting another person! You have so much fear of others hurting you, so you are scared that you'll hurt them, too!" He laughs.

He then points to Venus.

"That girl's worst fear is being left behind! She is scared that she will lose her best friend if she tells them how she really feels! She is full on in love with them!" He starts laughing hysterically.

I look over at Venus and see her looking down. She is blushing in embarrassment.

Toad Stool is jumping around the cell room with his hands in the air. He then suddenly leaps toward onto the metal bars and points at Otis. I turn to Otis. He looks pissed.

"Don't need to continue, buddy. You've proven yourself enough." Otis grumbles.

"This guy's greatest fear is-" Toad Stool says.

"Don't you dare fucking say it! I'll beat you and then bring you to the devil for him to finish you off!" Otis roars.

"He is scared that he will never be forgiven for his mistakes!" Toad Stool continues laughing, "He is scared that no matter what he does, no one will love him ever again because of what he did! He hates himself for his wrong doings! He hates that he is immortal because he wants to kill himself! And he is scared that his crush will hate him, too!"

Toad Stool starts rolling around on the floor laughing uncontrollably.

"Fucking bitch!" Otis storms over to the cell.

Venus and I grab onto Otis to hold him back. We tug on him, trying to pull him away from the cell.

"How dare you just laugh about our fears and insecurities?! Then just blurt them out as if it's nothing?! Some of us don't want anyone else knowing about those fears!" Otis cries out, tugging.

"Otis, please just let it go!" Venus tries to calm him down, "We can just forget we ever heard anything!"

"How can you forget that?! That was something really personal and he just fucking outed me! I didn't want you guys to know about that!" Otis screams.

I notice that he is crying. The tears fly off his cheeks and hiss on the magma floors.

"My secret was also blurted out! Mine was also extremely personal! So now we are even!" Venus cries.

"That fucking creep just exposed that I'm scared of being hated by the guy I like! And the fact that I hate myself!" Otis screams.

I let go of Otis and step away. I'm getting way too overwhelmed by everything. I try to take a breath.

"Well, he exposed the fact that I am in love with my best friend! And how I feel like I will ruin the friendship if I tell him how I really feel!" Venus cries, "I know that he doesn't like me back because he likes men! So there is no reason for me to tell him that I like him! I just have to suffer with my feelings, knowing that I will never be with the person I love!"

Otis stops pulling and stands still, staring at Venus. Venus lets go of his shoulder and collapses to the ground.

"And I can't just find a new person to love. No one is as special as him. No one can compare to his kindness and pureness." Venus cries.

She is covering her face with her paws as she sits on the ground. Each tear rolls down her elbows and drips onto her thighs.

"And knowing that he thinks no one will love him makes it all worse. Of course someone will love him. I will. I do. But he wants someone else to love him. He doesn't want me" Venus whimpers.

I can see Otis' face change expressions. He goes from upset and pissed to heartbroken and guilty.

"Venus.." Otis squats down in front of her.

I am getting the hint that she is in love with Otis. I feel bad.

"But I refuse to feel jealous of the guy he likes. I don't want him to feel bad and then pity me. I won't make him feel bad because of his sexuality. I don't want to give him another reason to hate himself." Venus says with sorrow.

Otis immediately falls onto Venus and squeezes her into a tight grasp. They both sob into each other's shoulders. Otis wraps his wings around her.

"I'm sorry, Ve. I love you so fucking much. I wish I could be a better friend. I should never make you feel like a third wheel. You will always be my number one. Even if you aren't my girlfriend. I will always love you." Otis says while tears drip off his face.

Otis then kisses the top of her head and strokes her fur with his hoof.

"I love you, too. And I'm sorry that I made you feel bad. I just want you to be happy. Even if you don't like me in that way, I just want you to be happy." Venus says as she strokes his cheek with her paw.

I don't know what to do in this situation. I don't want to interrupt them in the middle of their apologies, but at the same time, we still have to escape Hell.

Suddenly, I hear Toad Stool rattle the bars again.

"Gross! You two are just so sappy! Get a room!" He laughs.

Otis stands up quickly and marches over to the cell. I run over and stop him. I put my paws on his chest and keep him from going any further,

"Hold on, Otis. We still have to get out of here. Let's get back on track." I say.

He nods and then steps away. He walks back over to Venus and helps her up off my floor.

"Sprout! Help me out of here! I promise I can make your power grow stronger! Is that what you want?" Toad Stool tries to bribe me again.

I turn around and face him.

"I said that I wasn't going to help you. You are disgusting. Plus, I don't need to get stronger, I just need to get out of here." I grumble.

I am getting pretty annoyed by this guy. Can't believe that he's my real father.

"You have no control over your power in the mortal realm. Just stay here and work for the devil. He will find a good place for ya!" He chuckles.

"No. Fuck off." I turn to walk away.

"People will call you a monster out there. Even here in Hell, you are a freak. You don't belong anywhere. You're not a mortal. You're not a demon. You're a freak." He whispers.

I quickly turn back and dash to the cell. I immediately transform into the black, sludge, beast again. My huge nails clasp the metal bars. I look down at my psychotic father.

"I am a freak. I am a monster. I am all the things that people call me. But I do belong somewhere.." I growl, "With these wonderful friends. I don't need to fit in. I just need my friends."

Toad Stool is on the ground with his back up against the wall. His eyes are wide and his smug smile is gone. He doesn't say a word. He is dead silent.

I turn to Otis and Venus. They are looking up at me with terrified expressions. They look horrified, but also proud.

"You tell him, Sprout!" Otis shouts.

"Get that bitch!" Venus chants.

I smile and then turn back to Toad Stool. I lean down to his level.

"What was my worst fear again? Hurting someone?" I ask sarcastically.

He nods quickly. He is trembling with fear.

"I think you messed up there. My worst fear is hurting someone that I love. I have no problem hurting dirt bags." I grumble.

I reach into the cell and grab Toad Stool. He squirms around and tries to break free from my grasp, but I hold on tight.

"Hey, Otis?" I turn to Otis and Venus.

"Yeah?"

"Can we drop this guy off to the devil before we leave?" I ask, grinning.

"Yes, bitch!" Venus screams.

"I don't see why not. Let's just do it quickly then we gotta get out of here." Otis says.

"Will do. I don't think anyone will care if I walk around like this, do you?" I ask.

"You kinda stand out, but no one will wanna mess with you. You fit into the murderous group of demons." Venus says.

"Works for me."

I then pick up Otis and Venus. I set them on my back and head out of the dorm hallways.

True Act of Friendship (Venus' POV)

I am holding onto Sprout's brown vest as I ride on his back. I can see how his shirt is ripping a bit due to him being 5 times his normal size.

Otis is right next to me. I am still a bit flustered from the whole situation. I didn't want to tell Otis and I didn't want the other guy telling him either. I didn't want Otis to know at all.

I know that he likes Sprout. He never told me directly, but it's obvious. I am still confused how Sprout hasn't caught on. Or maybe he has and he just didn't mention it.

From the way that Otis sacrificed himself for Sprout, I could tell that he cares for him dearly. I know that he cares for me, too. But I know Otis. Otis definitely wants Sprout to love him. But from what Toad Stool said about Otis' fears, I think he doubts that Sprout will want him, too.

I can see why Otis hates himself so much. He wishes to change the past. He hates that he was the way he was. To be honest, I hate myself a little, too. We both grew up thinking that what we were doing was okay and normal. We were taught, we were trained, and we were bribed.

We were taught that what we want is to be number one. But in reality, I don't think we ever really did want that. We just wanted to be seen by a higher power. There are so many demons out there, of course we wanted to feel special. We did anything to get that feeling. Even hurt mortals.

But now I see that we were living a lie. We weren't thinking about what we really wanted, nor did we think about the mortals. We treated them like objects and just played with them like a game of chess. We took turns using mortals to get higher up on the board. By each play, we just tossed the mortals away and let them rot away.

I don't know exactly how Otis feels, but it sure can't be good. His job as a succubus and incubus was to use mortals in sexual ways. Me on the other hand, I just used mortals as puppets. I toyed with them, made them feel like they were going crazy.

I found joy and laughter out of what I was doing, but I never did stop to think about how they felt. They must've been terrified, scared, and confused.

I already feel terrible as a possessive demon. I can't even imagine how Otis feels as an incubus and succubus. I know how it feels to be used and seen as an object for others sexual pleasure. I wonder why I never thought of that in the past. I should've known how the mortals felt. I can relate to them in some way, but yet, I still ignored it and didn't even acknowledge it.

I guess I hate myself, too.

We are still sitting on Sprout's back, making our way to the mortal realm portal. We are now reaching the crowded area of Hell. There are lots of demons around.

I look around and see demons making out, getting drunk, getting high, and doing sexual acts. I never did realize how disgusting our world is. We normalize these things.

I can't complain too much though. I think that sexual acts can be a beautiful thing when it's with someone important and special. But when demons are out in the open like this and doing it for a show, it's disturbing and honestly gross to watch.

"Alright, Sprout," Otis says, "Let's just drop this creep off down that ledge right there and then you can shrink down to your normal size."

Otis points to the edge that leads to the devils room.

"Okay, Will do." Sprout replies.

Sprout then uses his claws to switch Toad Stool from one hand to the other. He lifts him up to the edge and holds him above the big drop.

"It was… not so fun meeting you, father. But I hope you have a nice and quick death. I sorta feel bad for you, but at the same time, you fucking suck." Sprout says to Toad Stool.

"Son! Please! If you give me a chance, I can help you! Whatever you want! I can make your dreams come true!" Toad Stool pleads.

"I thought you said that you make nightmares come true?" I chime in, "But technically you just do that in their mind. So really, there's nothing you can do. Say bye bye!"

"No! Please! I can change! Like these two did! I can be good! Let me just-" Sprout then releases Toad Stool.

Toad Stool slips from Sprout's long, sharp claws. He lets out a yelp as he falls down. He glides through the thick, humid, air as he falls to his death. I look over Sprout's shoulder to look down off the ledge. I watch Toad Stool fly through the air and then splat onto the hard magma bricks.

Of course he doesn't die, but soon, Sour Puss will see him and think that he escaped. Once a prisoner escapes their cell, that's when you know that they are too powerful to be let loose. So Sour Puss will have to kill him.

"Alright, so now that Sour Puss is distracted with him, we can get out of here." Otis says.

Otis and I then fly off of Sprout's back and land on the ground. Sprout then shifts back to his mortal form. Sprout's outfit is a bit stretched, but is still wearable.

"Alright, now we gotta go to the portal?" Sprout asks.

"Yes, we just gotta make it through the crowd." Otis replies.

I then mention something important.

"Otis, you are still recognizable. If we go through that crowd, demons will crowd us and word will get to Sour Puss. Do you want to shift back into your female form again?" I ask.

"You're right. I need to shift and then switch clothes with one of you. I am still number four-" Otis looks up at the scoreboard and then pauses.

He looks confused and upset. I look over at the board and read it. Otis is no longer in fourth place. I look at the top of the board and read his name. He is number one.

"Why the fuck am I number one?!" Otis shouts with anger and frustration.

"Number one?" Sprout asks, "Didn't you mention something about a leaderboard before, Venus? You said something about Otis being a number 4 rank."

"Yeah.." I reply, "Otis was number four rank because he got a ton of tasks done. Your rank goes up when you finish more assignments, but how did Otis get to number one? He literally just disobeyed the boss and tried to fight him."

"I think that Sour Puss counted Sprout.. when he possessed me, he made me.." Otis pauses.

He doesn't want to say it. I can tell it's really affecting him. He looks so guilty, even though it's not his fault this time.

"Otis, he is only doing it to get on your nerves. He wants you to get all upset. Just ignore it. All three of us know that it wasn't your fault. I explained it to Sprout, remember?" I explain.

"Yeah, I understand, Otis," Sprout chimes in, "I can see what your life is like. I believe that you are a good person and tried to stop Sour Puss."

Otis sits still and then looks back up at us.

"Thanks, guys. I guess it just made me feel like I hurt more mortals. I don't want to be that way. I want to be better." Otis starts to tear up.

I lean in and hug him gently. I rub his back and stroke his fur on his head.

"You are doing amazing. You haven't done anything like that for over a year. You are a good person, you are caring, you are an amazing friend, and a huge inspiration. If it weren't for you, I would've never made a change either." I assure him.

"Thank you. That really does mean a lot to hear." Otis says.

I then pull away from the hug. I can feel my face blush a little. I hate that I get this way around Otis.

"Alright, I gotta shift into my female form. Who is gonna switch with me?" Otis asks.

"Female form?" Sprout asks, confused.

"Otis can shift into a succubus rather than an incubus on command. It's a rare ability, but can be useful in times like this." I explain.

"Oh okay."

"Sprout, do you think that you could switch with me? Venus' outfit is a bit more difficult to get on quickly. Plus.. she's a female. I don't want any shady guys trying anything." Otis asks.

"Don't worry about that. Sprout has been through worse situations than me. So I think he should leave his clothes on. I can just change quickly." I offer.

I know that Sprout has been through so many different situations related to being undressed. I don't want to trigger any trauma.

"It's alright. I have my respect for females. I know how females are a bit more sexualized than males. Plus, I'm wearing layers. I can just take off my vest." Sprout explains.

I notice how Sprout is a bit shaky, He doesn't seem comfortable. I feel bad, but also grateful to hear that he has deep respect for females. And he sees me as a female. A lot of people just see me as a man that dresses like a girl.

"Thank you, Sprout. I really appreciate it." I thank him softly.

"No worries."

"Alright, let's go to that dark corner right there so then we don't draw attention to ourselves." Otis says.

* * *

Narrator:
Otis then shifts into his female form and switches outfits with Sprout. Sprout only removes his brown vest first. Then he slips on Otis' sweater. While wearing the sweater, he removes the white button up from underneath. Then handing it to Otis.

* * *

"Alright, now we are disguised enough. The only thing we need to be careful of is Sour Puss. If he somehow finds out that we are here, we are most likely dead or forced to work as slaves for him." Otis explains.

"Okay, let's go to the portal." Sprout says.

The three of us make our way back to the entrance of the hang out area. There are still demons walking around, flying through the air, and being nasty.

We make our way through the huge crowd. I notice that Sprout is uncomfortable. There are a lot of demons just being sexual and making out. It's as if it's demon mating season.

"Hey, cuties! Wanna drink from the bar?" A young man asks.

"No, thanks." Sprout replies.

"I wasn't talking to you! I'm not a faggot! I'm into these two ladies." The demon grumbles aggressively.

"We are faggots though. So you better fuck off or else you'll catch a case of the bisexual!" I threaten, while also making a slight joke.

I do tend to make jokes to cope. I don't know how else to react to certain situations. I refuse to cry. I don't like showing my sensitive side. I don't necessarily feel weak when I cry, I just don't like the feeling of giving into the horrible people. They want to make me feel less than, but I refuse to let them see how it affects me.

As we continue our way through the crowd, more demons continue to try and seduce us. Sprout looks extremely uncomfortable and Otis looks like he's about to throw hooves. One hit with that hoof to the teeth, would leave you bleeding for a long time.

"Hey, Sprout, are you okay? Is this too much for you?" I ask, checking in on him.

"I'm okay. Just a bit uncomfortable with all the revealing outfits and naked demons. Just not used to it." He explains.

"If you want me to help you I can. Usually when demons see that one demon is with another, they don't get involved, thinking that they are dating or hooking up. They don't want to get onto another demon's turf with their partner." I explain.

"We could all hold paws and hooves and pretend that we are a throuple. Demons will get the message that they don't want to hit on us." Otis says.

"That sounds like a plan if you're comfortable with it, Sprout." I say.

"Just holding paws and hooves? No kissing?" Sprout asks.

"Yes. Just to trick the other demons that we are all partners." I assure him.

Sprout then nods in agreement. We all hold onto each other's paws and hooves. I stand in the middle, holding onto Otis and Sprout. I get a little flustered from holding hands with Otis.

I know that I always get hugs from him, he kisses the top of my head, and says "I love you," but I still always get flustered. I know that he does it in a loving best friend way, but to me, it's my crush giving me affection.

I wish I didn't feel this way about him. I don't want to ruin the friendship with my feelings. Now that he knows about how I truly feel, he might stop giving me the extra affection. Romance always ruins everything.

* * *

The three of us finally make it to the other side with the portal. We all let go of each other and then make our way to the portal.

"We are finally here. That was pretty easy." Otis says.

"The only thing that was tough was dealing with creeps, but other than that, it was really simple and quick." Sprout adds.

I then step up to the portal and see the portal guard. They are watching over the portal and making sure that no one is planning to break the rules.

"Hello, we have a question." I start making up a plan to trick them.

I know that if they see all three of us try to go through together, they will find it way too suspicious.

"What's your question?" They ask.

"So we were wondering what your sexuality is? Because one of my friends at the bar is interested. She was going on about how cute you are and how she wants to get to know you." I lie.

"Oh, well, I'm bisexual. Is your friend cute?" The guard asks.

"Well, I'm not really into ladies, so I can't tell whether or not she's cute. Plus you have your own preferences on appearance, right? So I was just gonna let you know that she's really interested and then we were gonna go to the club while you two hit it off." I explain.

"Well, I'm not technically supposed to leave my post, but I really badly wanna meet her." The guard says.

"Maybe you can run over there and then bring her back with you?" I offer.

"That's a good idea! I'll do that!" The guard then runs over to the bar.

I turn to Sprout and Otis and signal them to follow me. Otis clicks his hooves on the bricks as he walks up the stairs to the portal.

"That was a good plan, Ve." Otis says.

"Thanks! I kinda knew that everyone was in mating season mode, so I used that to my advantage." I joke.

All three of us start to walk closer to the portal. I then walk over to the panel to type in the location we want to go to. Otis and Sprout then switch outfits again. Otis then shifts back into his male form.

As I am walking, I can feel a rumble on the ground. I lose my balance and then topple over onto Otis. Otis catches me in his arms and then falls onto his butt.

"What in Hell?!" I blurt out.

"Was that an earthquake?" Sprout asks.

I shake my head.

"Earthquakes don't happen in Hell." Otis says.

Sprout looks confused.

"Then what was it?" He asks.

I then lift myself up off of Otis and then help him up. I look around the portal to see if I stepped on any sort of trap. Nothing.

Otis then starts looking around the area to see if something could have fallen. Sprout looks toward the busy crowd.

"Guys, everyone at the hangout space has stopped. No one is moving. They are just standing there, staring up." Sprout says.

I look over at the crowd and see everyone. They look stunned. No one is talking or anything. I then turn to see what they are staring at and see..

Sour Puss.

"Oh. My. Fucking. Hell." I exhale.

Sour Puss is humongous. I am honestly terrified. Sour Puss never really comes out of his room. He just lounges and makes all his slaves do his work, but he must mean business if he's coming out of his den.

"Uhm, guys… you might wanna look at this.." I say.

Otis and Sprout turn to see Sour Puss standing tall before all of Hell. I look back over at the crowd and see that every single demon hasn't moved. Every demon in Hell is frozen.

Sour Puss leans forward toward the crowd and then reaches out his claws. Standing on his long, sharp claws is Toad Stool. That creep is still alive?

"Where is Otis and Venus?" Sour Puss roars.

Everyone is quiet and there is no response.

"Does everyone here remember this nightmare demon? The one that broke the most important rule?" Sour Puss asks.

The crowd nods in sync, still staying quiet.

"Turns out that the offspring is alive." He says.

A wave of shock floods the crowd. Demons gasp. Demons start to mumble questions. The crowd is stirred up from the news.

"For years, we assumed that this demon's offspring was dead, but it's alive. In fact, it's among our people. I want you slaves to find the offspring." Sour Puss says with a deep voice.

Shit.

"Sprout," I whisper, "We need to get you out of here. Fast."

Sprout nods and Otis follows along.

"This hybrid is a demon and mortal combined." Sour Puss continues, "From what Toad Stool has said, this hybrid is nothing like us. It's quite more powerful. Because it is half mortal, it can't control its demonic power in the mortal realm. But here in Hell, it's too powerful for you small demons. Only I can possibly compare. So find that hybrid so I can kill it."

"Sprout, they are going to turn you in if we don't get out of here." Otis whispers aggressively.

We need to make it out fast, but also unnoticed. We agree to make our way to the portal.

"Otis! I know that you have returned! Come to me right now!" Sour Puss demands.

Otis turns to see Sour Puss looking for him in the crowd of demons. I look over at Sprout and see that he is in a panic. He is probably about to have a panic attack.

"Venus! You little traitor! Working for the criminal? Hiding with him right now?" Sour Puss roars.

We regain our focus and continue to make our way to the portal, but Sprout is on the floor, in the middle of a panic attack. I quickly stop and go back to him.

"Sprout, you're okay. You're safe. Just take a few breaths and let's get out of here." I try to calm him down.

"I see them! There is the number one rank, Otis, and his friend Venus!" I hear a random demon shout.

Fuck!

Sour Puss turns to us and sees that we are trying to escape. I quickly grab Sprout and pull him over my shoulder. I start running toward the portal and scream at Otis.

"Otis! Put in the cords! Hurry!" I exclaim.

Otis turns quickly and sees like I'm running with Sprout on my back. He looks up and sees that Sour Puss has spotted us.

"Shit! Shit! Shit!" Otis starts to panic, "My hooves don't work on this damn thing!"

His hooves are too big to push the stone buttons. I have to get there fast, but Sprout is slowing me down. I can't drop him or else he'll die. But if I keep this slow pace, we will all die.

Suddenly, I see Sour Puss' shadow falling over us and the portal. As I'm running, I see Otis look up at Sour Puss who is standing right beside the portal. Sour Puss is like 100 times the size of the portal.

I then see that Sour Puss is lifting up his arm. He is about to squish Otis.

"Otis! Watch out! Jump to me!" I cry out.

Otis then leaps from the stairs and collapses onto the floor. His knees scrape the brick and his fur burns on the magma. He lets out a yelp from the pain of the lava.

Sour Puss slams his arm down in front of the portal, nearly breaking the ground around it.

"Looky looky who it is. We have the number one rank, my little traitor, and the long lost hybrid. What a cute little reunion." Sour Puss chuckles.

I am frozen with fear. Otis comes running to Sprout and I. I am trembling from head to toe. Sprout is only getting more overwhelmed by the chaos.

"You thought you could just drop off this little psychopath at my room and then just leave like that? This demon told me everything. Especially that this little guy is his son." Sour Puss grumbles, "Otis, isn't this the target you couldn't finish off? The one that I had to do for you to make you number one?"

Otis looks furious, but terrified.

"Now I understand how this target could see you when you first met him. He is part demon. I didn't even notice." Sour Puss chuckles.

Sprout tried to move off my back. I then slowly set him down.

"Just let us leave!" Sprout shouts.

"I'm afraid I can't do that. I can't have three of my slaves on the loose, especially since these two broke so many rules." Sour Puss says.

Sprout looks upset.

"Earlier you said that I was too powerful compared to the other demons and that's why you want me dead. Right?" Sprout asks.

"That is correct. But you could never compare to me. You are nothing but an ant to me." Sour Puss laughs.

I can see where Sprout is going with this. He can't just give himself up for us.

"Sprout was never your slave! He was born in the mortal realm! He owns himself! You will let him go and let Otis go! I will stay in return!" I try to bribe Sour Puss.

"Venus! No! You have to come with us!" Otis shouts at me.

I look over to Otis and see that he is very worked up. He is extremely stressed out.

"No! You two have been through enough with this guy! I need to take a turn! You two need to live life freely for once!" Sprout exclaims.

"You cannot be talking! You weren't ever living freely! You know good and well what happened to you!" Otis shouts back.

I look up at Sour Puss and see him smiling. On his shoulder is Toad Stool, laughing his ass off.

I know that we all deserve to be free. Otis was favored by Sour Puss and had to do a lot more work. Sprout already was sexually assaulted and abused. All I did was joke around and toy with mortals. I can take a few hits.

"Sour Puss! Let them both go! You can kill me instead!" I scream.

"Venus! No!" Otis shouts, "Kill me! I broke the most rules!"

"Guys! This isn't helping anything!" Sprout yells, "He will just kill all of us!"

Sour Puss is lauhing at us arguing to save each other's lives.

"I won't kill Otis or Venus. I will just imprison them and make them do more work. Sprout, I will kill you because I can't have a killing rampage in Hell." Sour Puss explains.

"But I can't kill demons! Only you can!" Sprout shouts.

"Well since you are so powerful, you could very much kill demons. You nearly killed Otis. But you were lucky." Sour Puss says.

It's a shocking feeling knowing that Sprout is capable of such things. He is so powerful, but he looks so shy and mellow. How can such a small, young man be so strong?

"Guys! What are we gonna do?! We can't run away because Sour Puss is blocking the portal!" Otis exclaims.

I start to think about different alternatives that we could do to escape. We can't trade anyone because Sour Puss doesn't bargain. If we try to attack him, we will all just die.

I don't want to see Otis die. Nor do I want to see Sprout die. I want Otis to live a happy life. He deserves it.

"Guys! I have an idea!" I shout.

"What is it?!" Sprout asks.

"It's extremely risky, but it might work." I say.

"Anything could help us right now!" Otis says.

I take a deep breath. I know that it won't end so smoothly. But it's the only option we have. I want Otis to live with his love.

"Otis! I will use my power of possession to take control of your body. Doing that will keep Sour Puss from possessing you. The body can only take so many souls at once. But when I possess you, I will still give you your free will." I explain, "Sprout, you will shift into your insanity form and do your best to hurt Sour Puss. If you can kill demons, there's a chance that you can at least make the devil bleed."

"Once you possess my body, what will we do?" Otis asks.

"All three of us will do our best to fight this bitch." I say.

"But we won't survive. What's the point of fighting if we are just going to die?" Otis asks.

I take a breath.

"It's just a distraction for him. If we are fighting him, he will move his arm and then we will be able to make a run for the portal." I explain.

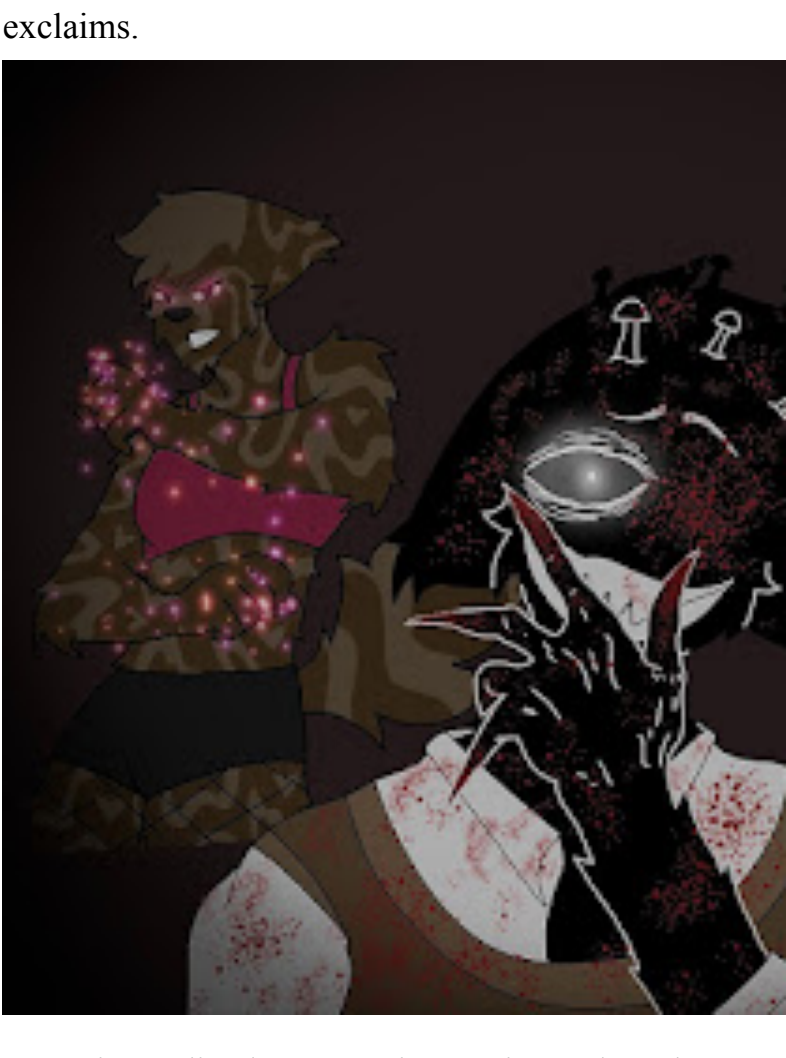
"That's actually so smart! Let's do it!" Sprout says as he transforms.

Turns out, Sprout's demonic form has blood with it. I wonder why. Maybe because the last time it was out, it had blood on it.

I then work up my power and grab hold of Otis. I use my power to possess him, but leaving his free will. Otis' horns crack and then start to glow free will. Otis' horns crack and then start to glow.

"We are going to go all out for this, okay? Just fight him as much as possible. Otis and I will just be distractions while you, Sprout, will try to hurt him enough for him to move his arm." I say.

"Let's fuck up this cock sucker!" Otis exclaims.



I immediately pounce into action. I don't have much strength besides my power. But my power is only to help Otis from getting possessed by Sour Puss. It can't really do much else.

I charge toward Sour Puss and then use my legs to push me off the ground. I leap into the air and then use my levitating power to fly up to Sour Puss' shoulder.

Otis uses his wings to fly up to the other side, where Toad Stool is. He starts kicking and punching Toad Stool to knock him off. It's smart that he is doing that. Toad Stool might try to get in the way of things and mess up our plan.

I look down at Sprout and see him get larger. His claws grow and his shirt starts to rip. I realize that it might fall off when it rips fully. Sprout will get into another panic attack if that happens.

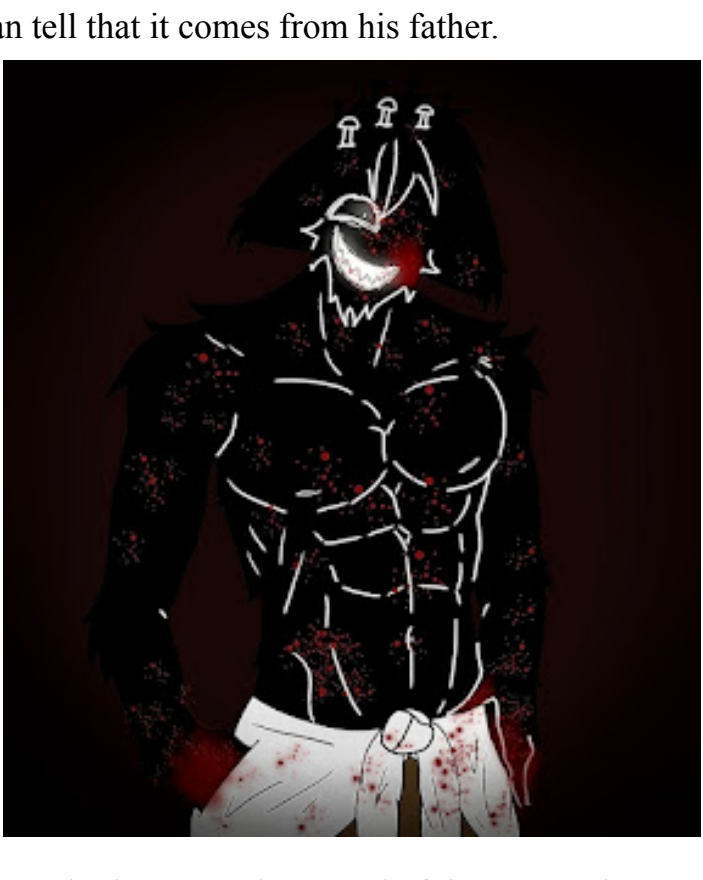
"Sprout! Your shirt!" I exclaim.

He looks down and notices that his brown vest ripped fully.

"Don't worry! I got it!" He shouts.

He then quickly unbuttons his white shirt and ties it around his waist. Smart. His waist seems to not grow as much. Mainly just his chest and torso.

I then get back to distracting Sour Puss. Sprout comes charging at Sour Puss' stomach and then slices across his gut. Blood pours out, splattering all over Sprout and the ground. Sour Puss lets out a painful grunt. Sprout starts laughing like a maniac. I can tell that it comes from his father.



I look over at the crowd of demons and see them all scream and flee from the area. They are terrified. I bet it's because Sprout was able to make the devil bleed. It's actually very helpful that the other demons are running away. There is no backup for Sour Puss.

I glance over at Otis. He is fighting Toad Stool. Looks like he is struggling. Toad Stool is using some sort of power. I can see that Otis looks more emotional rather than angry. Toad Stool laughing uncontrollably again. He must be making Otis have nightmares. More like showing him his worst fears.

I start to fly over to him, but then see Otis manage to get a hold of Toad Stool. He is crying, but also yelling at him. Toad Stool continues to laugh like a psychopath. Otis has it handled. He won't give into his fears.

Sour Puss suddenly lifts up one arm and swats me. I go flying into the wall. The lava burns my back. I let out a cry of pain.

"Get off of me, you bastards! You aren't going to manage to kill me!" Sour Puss roars.

"We will do what we can!" I scream.

I then use my legs to launch myself off the wall and fly through the air. I turn my body and then kick Sour Puss in the eye. His tears fly out and drip onto the ground.

"Fuck!" He screams.

I know that I can't kill him. Nor can Otis or Sprout. But we can make him feel pain. That's all we need for him to move his other arm.

I look down at Sprout and see him tearing at Sour Puss' chest. I notice that Sour Puss already healed from the last attack. He is much stronger than us.

I realize that none of what we are doing is causing enough pain. It's time for my backup plan. I knew that I would have to do this.

I take a breath. I can feel my heartbeat faster and faster. My head starts to ache from the idea. But I have to do it. I have to for Otis and for Sprout.

"Ve! I knocked down Toad Stool! He fell into Sour Puss' room. He can't fly back out! Now should I continue to fight Sour Puss?" Otis shouts.

"I have an idea! Just go down to Sprout and start kicking Sour Puss in the gut!" I exclaim.

He nods and then dashes down to Sprout. Sprout is still tearing the shit out of Sour Puss. Blood splatters all over. But Sour Puss continues to heal within a second.

"Otis and Sprout, go to the wall behind you!" I command.

I then go to the same wall, but stay floating in the air. Sour Puss heals again and then brushes off the blood as if it's dust.

"Give up? Good. Because you would never kill me." Sour Puss chuckles.

I then once again use my legs to launch myself into the air. I look down at Otis and Sprout and give them a slight smile.

I know what I'm doing. I am sacrificing myself for them. I don't want to die. I really don't. But I really need to help save Otis. He is the only thing that matters. If he's not happy, I'm not happy.

I always wanted to be able to get together with him, but I know good well that it will never happen. I already ruined the friendship with my romantic feelings. Otis already found the one he wants. So I don't see why I should live on.

I don't want to die, but I don't know why I would keep living. I don't have much to look forward to. The only thing I can think of is seeing Otis' smile when he gets with Sprout. I should be happy for him. I usually am happy when he's happy. But when I am being replaced, how can I be happy?

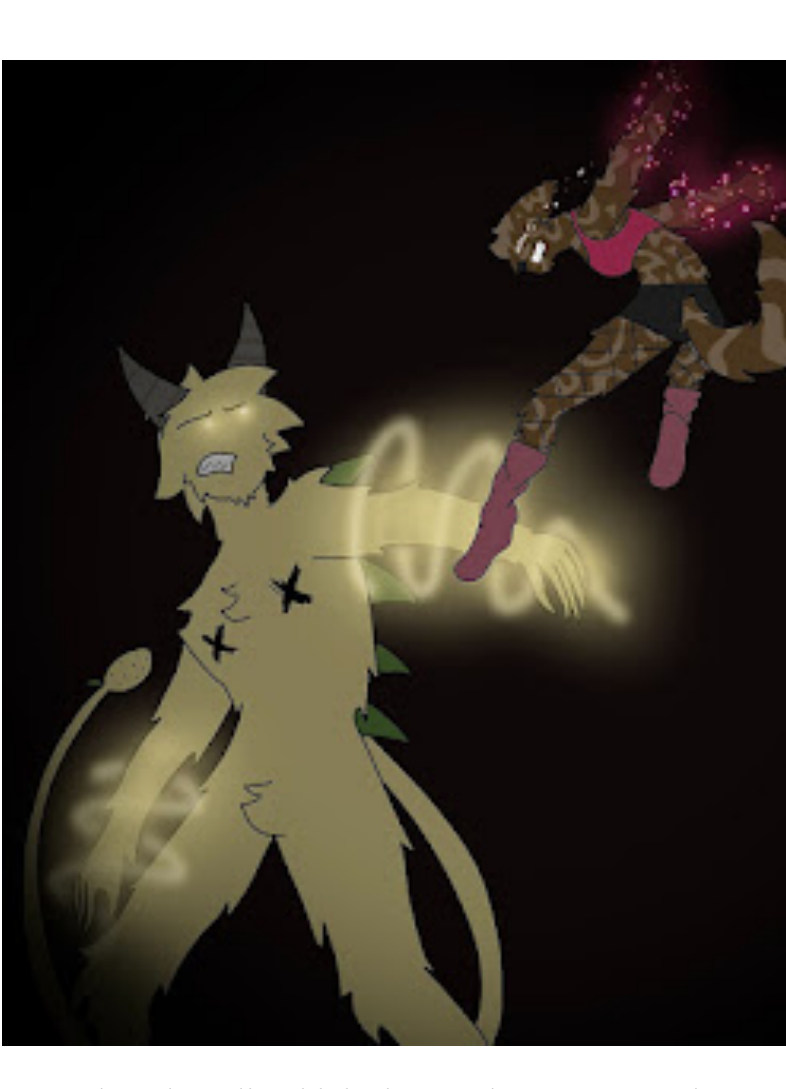
I can feel tears build up in my eyes as I fly through the hot, humid air. I know I'm not technically being replaced at all. But it feels like I'm not the number one in Otis' life anymore. I know that he said that I was the most important, but I still feel like he wants to believe that.

As I'm flying in the air, everything slows down. Time doesn't stop, but loses its speed. I see Sour Puss start to charge up his power. He's going to try and kill Sprout or possess him. I don't think he realizes that I'm in the air, headed straight for him.

"Sour Puss!" I cry out.

I see him slowly look up at me. His face changes expressions. He wasn't expecting me to come straight for him by myself. He lifts up his arm and then changes stances. He is preparing to stop me from hitting him.

Exactly what I want him to do.



The adrenaline kicks in. My heart races. I then see time resume to its normal speed. I go flying toward Sour Puss. I nearly hit him in his chest, but I am stopped.

My neck is in pain. I am still in the air, but I am not flying anymore. I look down and see that Sour Puss is using his phantom hands on me. He is still very large, but his phantom hands are small enough to wrap around my neck.

I start choking. I gasp for air, but can't breathe. I know that I'm going to die. There is no way out of this.

I then try to scream for Otis and Sprout to make a run for the portal, but I can't speak due to me being choked. I can't even see what Otis and Sprout are doing right now. Otis is probably really upset with me for being so stupid. He usually gets angry when he's heartbroken.

"Venus!!!" Otis cried out.

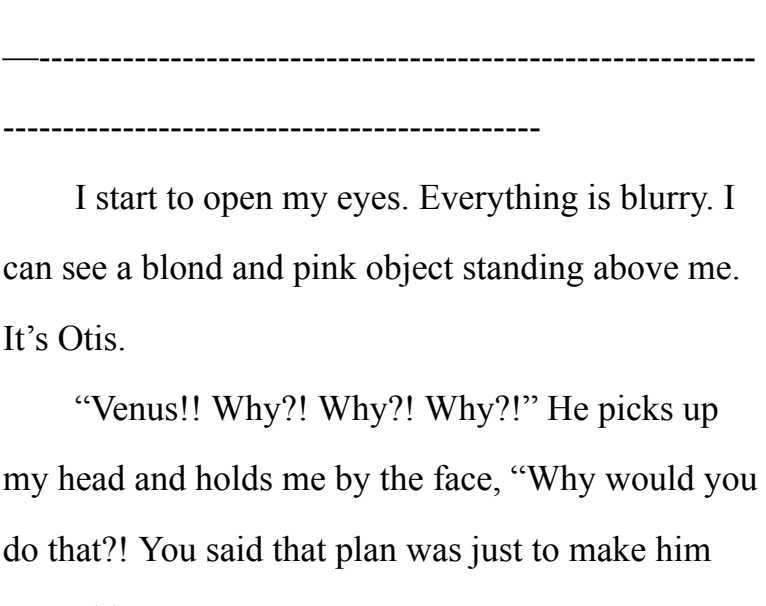
I know that he will miss me. Maybe I do matter to him more than I thought. But either way, I had to make this sacrifice. It's the only way for them to be free. I wish I could've lived to see the day that Otis and Sprout get together. It would've broken my heart, but also warmed my heart to see Otis so happy.

"VENUS!!" I hear Otis again.

His voice is scratchy and heavy. He is in so much pain. I can tell. I wish there was another way for you to be free. But I had to, Otis.

I'm so sorry, Otis.

Everything goes black.



I start to open my eyes. Everything is blurry. I can see a blond and pink object standing above me. It's Otis.

"Venus!! Why?! Why?! Why?!" He picks up my head and holds me by the face, "Why would you do that?! You said that plan was just to make him move his arm!"

I groan from the amount of pain I'm in. I can't move my arms or legs. My whole body is weak.

"You're right. The plan was to make Sour Puss move his arm. Now look at the portal." I groan.

Otis looks over at the portal and notices that Sour Puss' arm moved. He then turns back at me. He stares into my eyes.

"But you just got yourself seriously hurt! You might even.." Otis pauses.

He can't say it. He knows what's going to happen. We both do.

"There's nothing you can do now. Just get Sprout and get out of here." I whimper.

"No! No! No! I can't live without you! You are my best friend!" Otis cries.

Tears are rolling down his face. I realize that I'm also crying.

"Otis, you have Sprout. I know that you love him. He may not be your best friend, but he will be more than that." I say.

"Fuck! Fuck! Fuck! You are so fucking stupid, Venus! Don't you understand what you just did?! Don't you understand how much I actually love you?! Just because you aren't my crush, doesn't mean that you aren't the most important person in my life!" Otis continues to yell at me.

I know that he isn't mad at me. He is mad that I chose to make this sacrifice. He is mad at Sour Puss.

"Otis. You'll be okay. Just continue fighting for the people you love. Never give up. Keep that stubbornness you have. It can be very useful." I say gently.

I can feel my blood spilling out of my mouth. It slides down and drips along with my tears.

"God fucking damnit, Venus!" You don't understand! Sprout, come over here and kill me! I can't live without her!" Otis screams.

I turn my head slightly to see Sprout fighting Sour Puss. He is enormous. He is the same size as the devil himself. Sprout is actually doing something to Sour Puss. It appears that Sprout has a good chance at killing Sour Puss. I then turn back to Otis.

"Don't you dare order Sprout to kill you. You know how that would affect him. He already has a fear of hurting others. Let alone hurting one of his best friends. You will get out of here and go marry that mother fucker!" I joke.

I let out a slight smile. Then I start to cough on the air. More blood pours out of my mouth.

"Ve-nus! P-please don't le-ave me! J-just heal! Please!" Otis sobs.

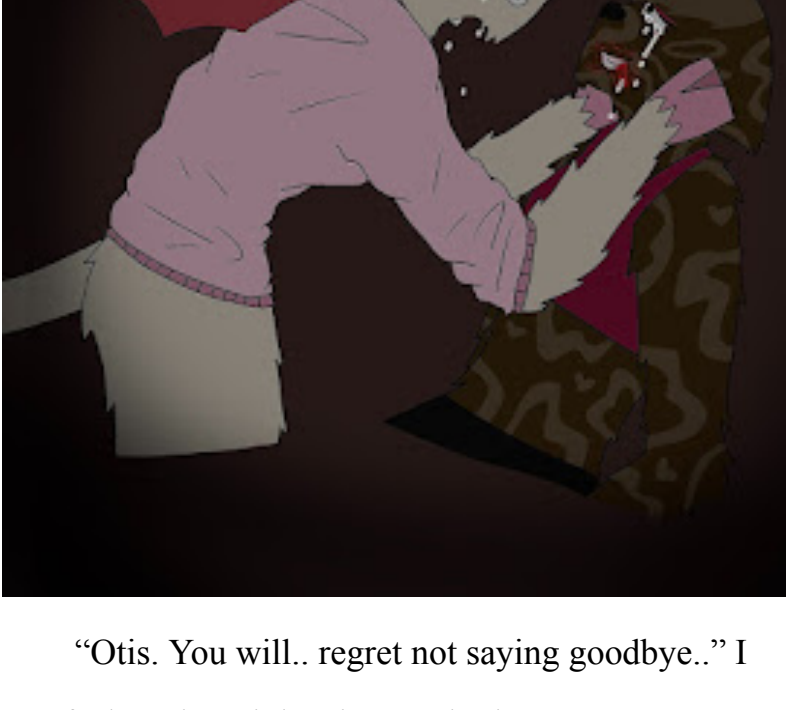
His voice breaks and cracks. It's so scratchy. He sounds like he's choking as well. I know that he knows that he can't stop what's going to happen. He knows that I can't heal. Not after the devil choked me with his strength.

"Otis, I love you so much. Don't ever forget me." I sigh.

"S-stop it! I need to f-find a way to save y-you! Just h-hang on!" He continues to sob uncontrollably.

"Say that you love me. I need to hear you say it before I go." I say, half joking.

"P-please don't l-leave me!!" He begs.



"Otis. You will.. regret not saying goodbye.." I can feel my breath leaving my body.

He continues to sob. He can't bring the words to say anything. His crying keeps him from being able to breath or speak. I can tell that he wants to, but it probably hurts to say goodbye.

I want to say a few more words before I leave, but I can't speak. My body has lost all of its strength. My sight starts to blur even more. I try to keep my eyes open, but can't. My muscles refuse to continue to work.

All I can do is watch my entire life flash into my mind. I see the moment I met Otis. We were only in our 50s. In mortal years, that seems old. We demons don't age as fast. So we were actually pretty young at the time.

Otis was failing his classes and training. I of course was, too. But I was a big bully back then. I made fun of him for disappointing the boss. He never cried, only yelled at me. I was pretty stupid back then. I always picked fights I knew I wouldn't win. When he yelled at me, I cried. Eventually, he understood that I was stupid, but sensitive.

Otis stopped yelling at me so much and started being nicer. I was very ornery, but I was grateful for him. No one really understood me. But he did. He cared. That's why I always liked him.

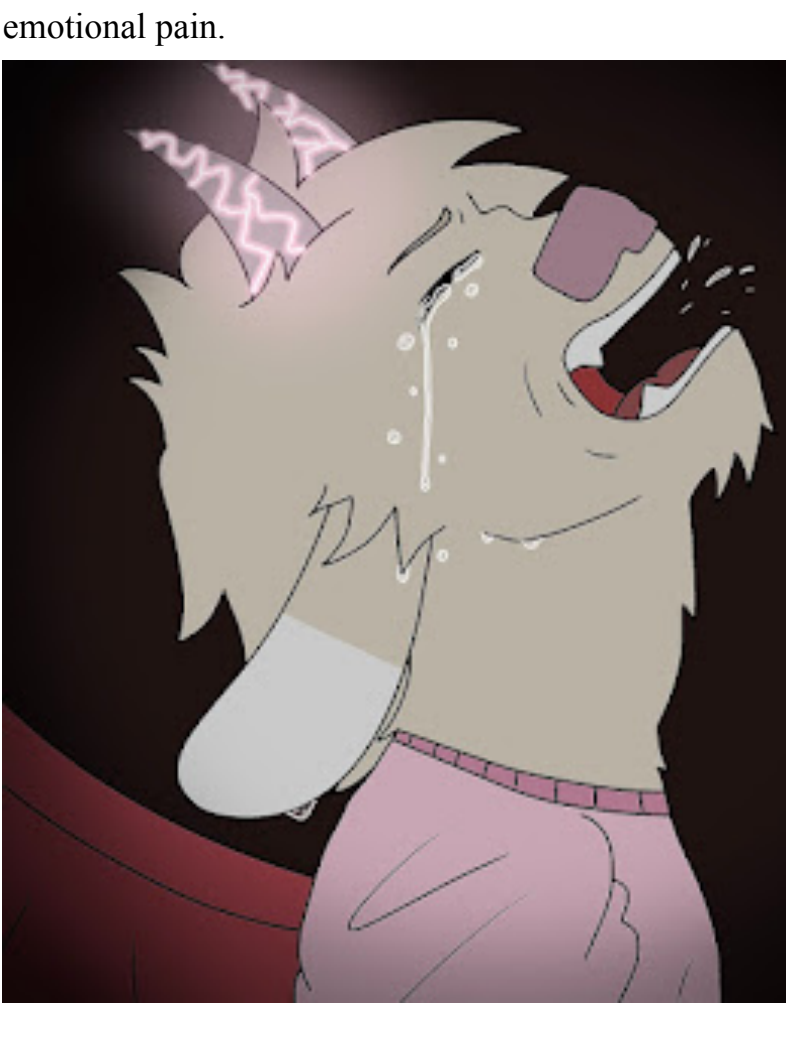
As we grew older, we built a stronger connection. We hung out more than anyone else. We did everything together. He was there for me when I cried. He was there to protect me from creeps. He was there when I came out as a transwoman. It was a difficult time.

He was so supportive. He was so sweet. He didn't care about what others thought of him. But he always cared when someone said something shitty about me. He was so quick to fight for me. He would beat up anyone who made fun of me and my new name.

Now, he does care about what others think about him. He carries a huge burden with his guilt. He hates himself. I wish he didn't. I don't hate him one bit.

"Otis…" I manage to say, "*I love you…*"

The last thing I hear is Otis scream out in emotional pain.



To be continued..

I hope you have enjoyed reading this part of Home Grown! It was a lot of fun writing this! It definitely took a lot of energy and work out of me, but it was definitely worth it!

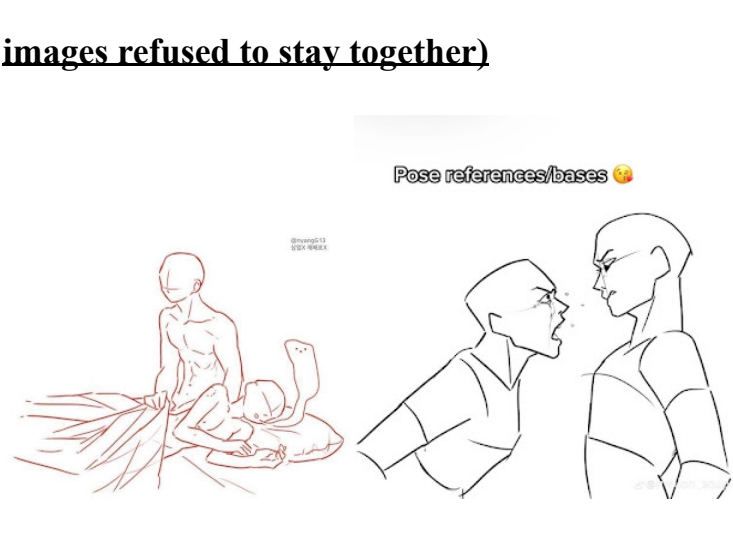
I really love how it came out and I hope you guys do too!

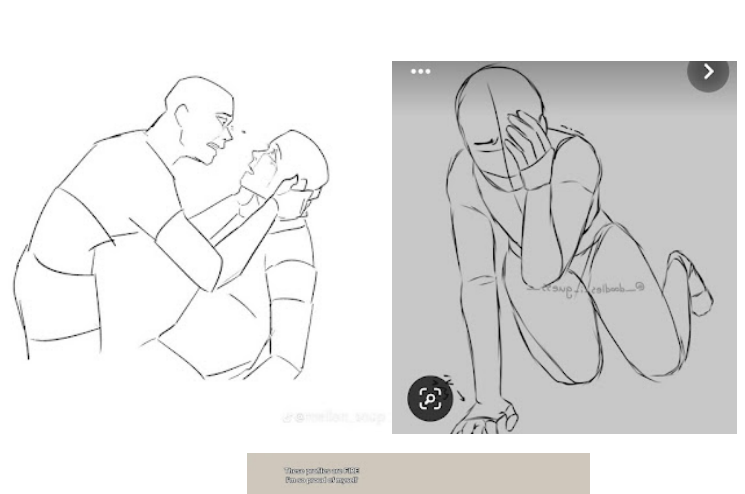
Share with your friends if you think they will enjoy reading this as well!

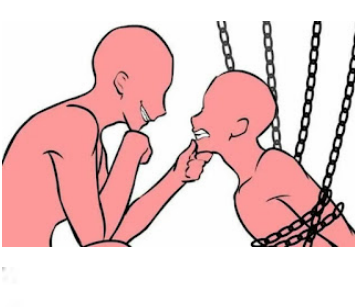
Love you all!!! /platonically :3

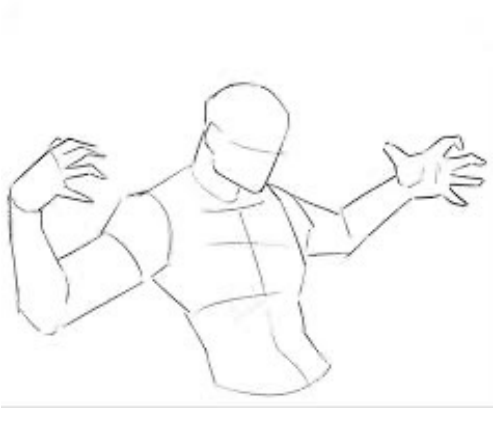
Pose bases used in the art: (I was unable to find some of them, so forgive me for that)

(You will have to scroll quite a bit because the images refused to stay together)









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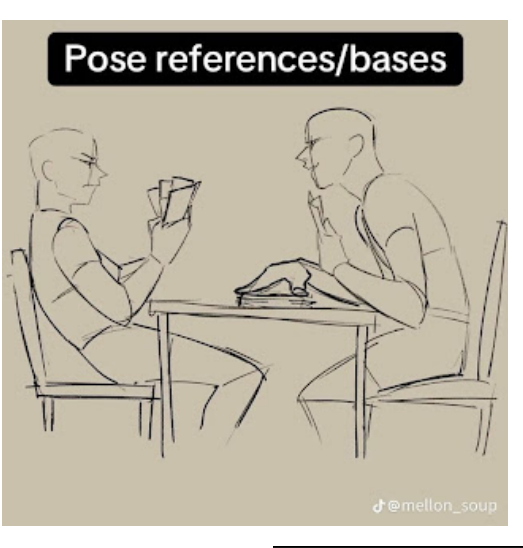

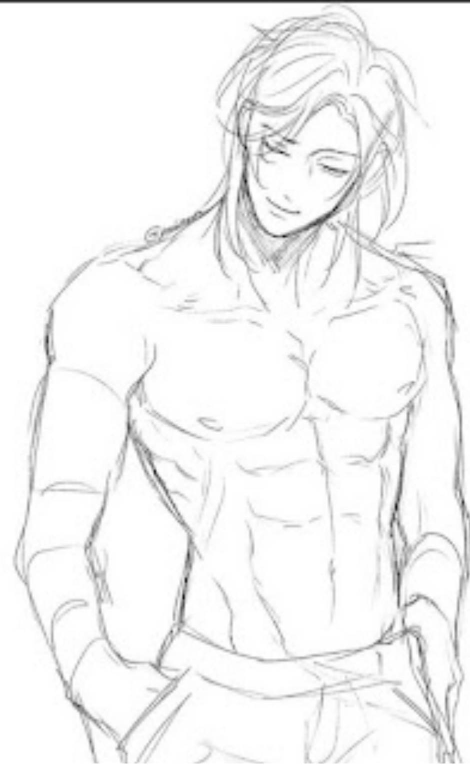

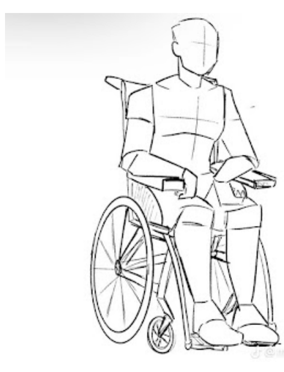

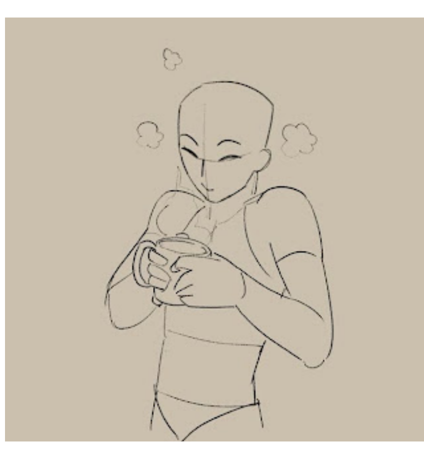

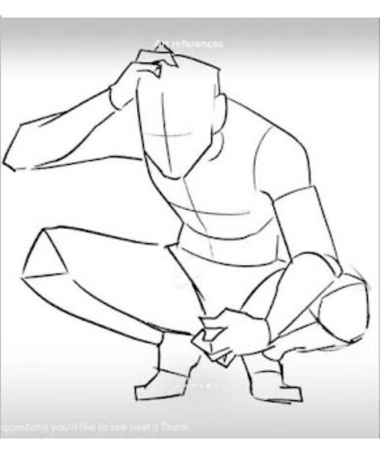

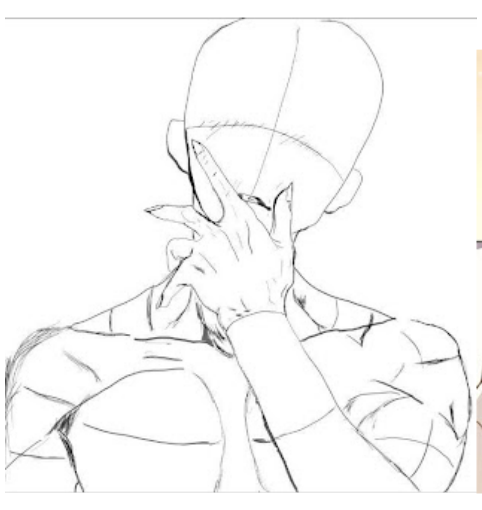

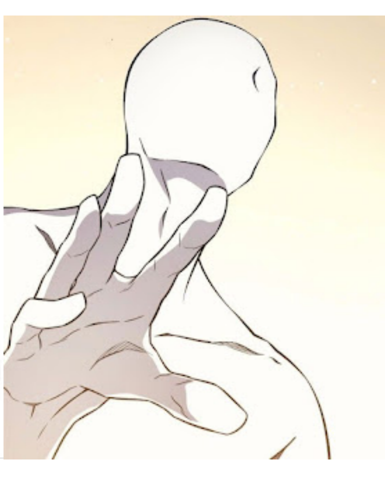

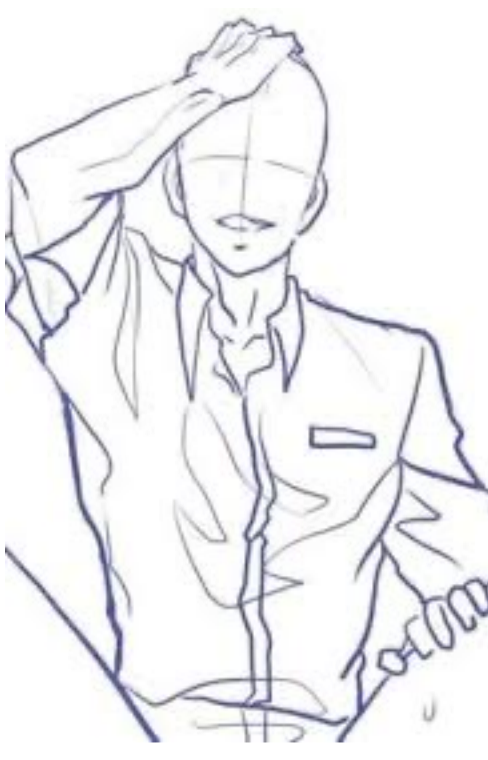

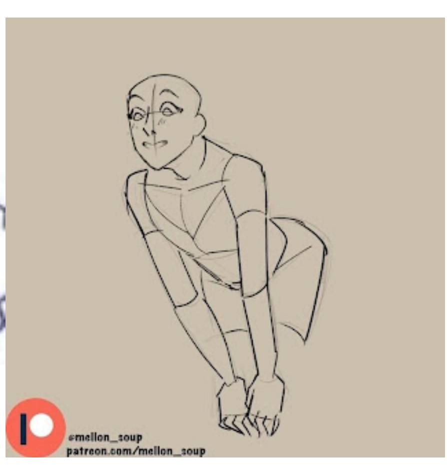
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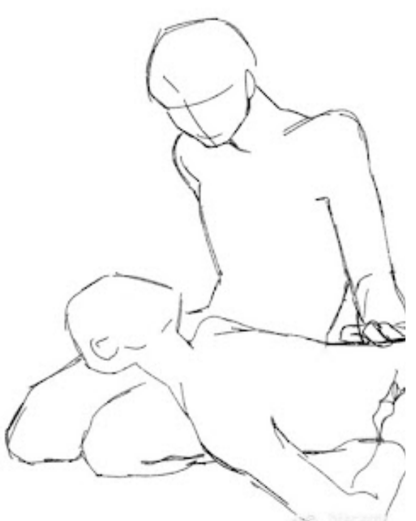

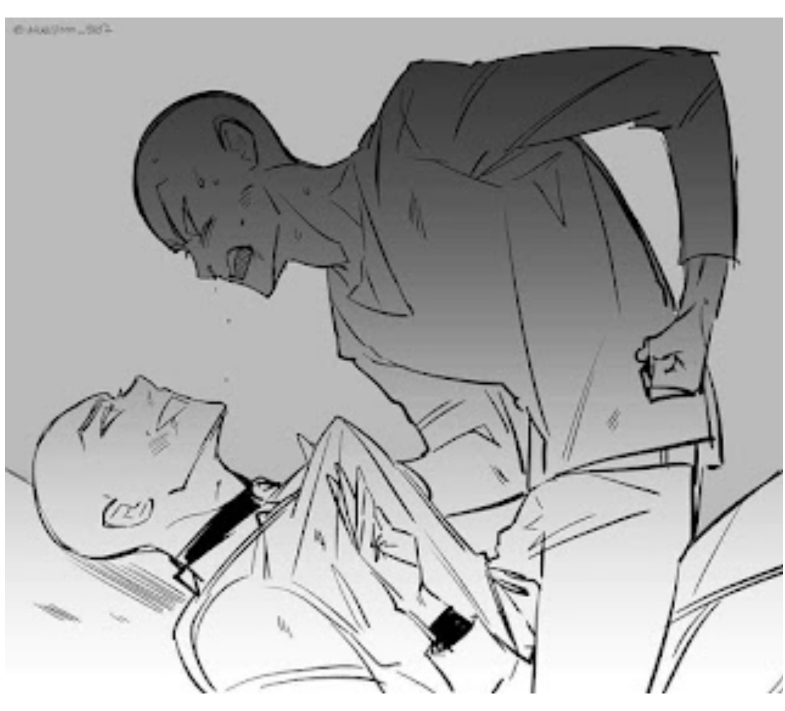

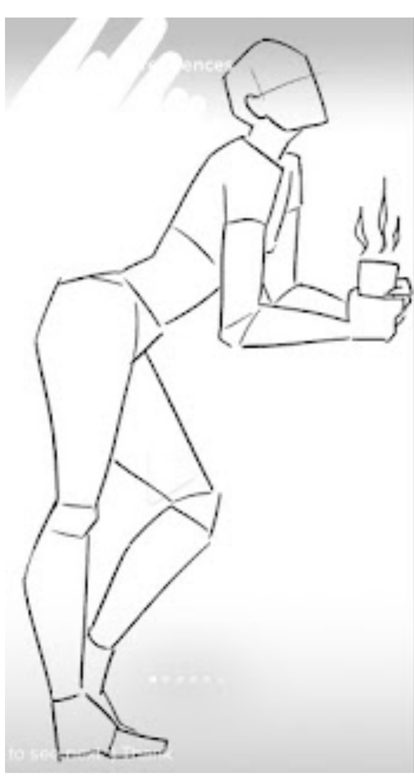

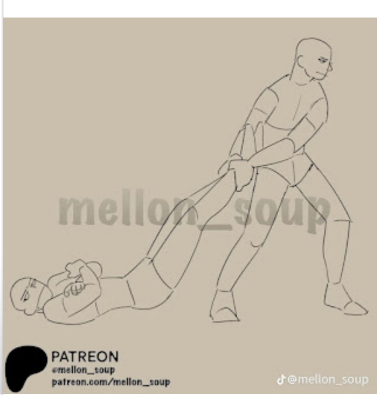
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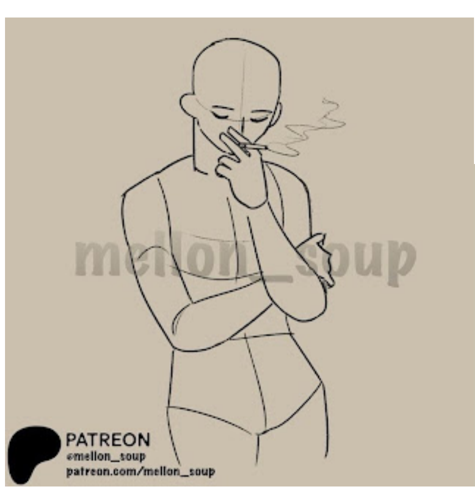
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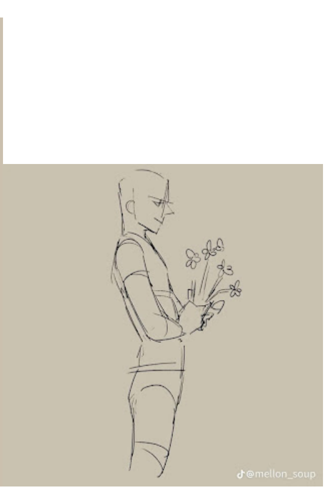

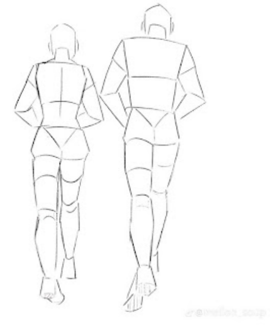

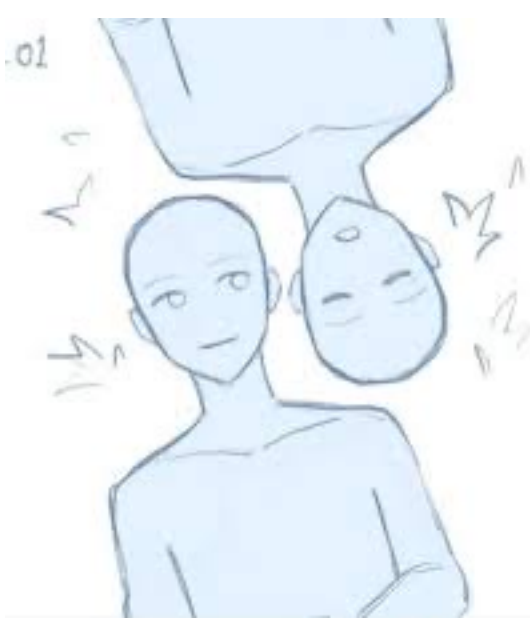
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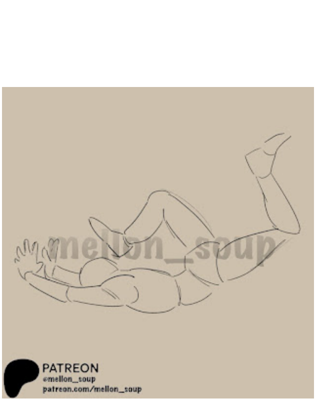
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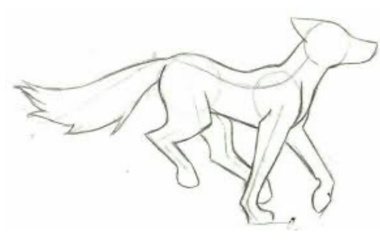

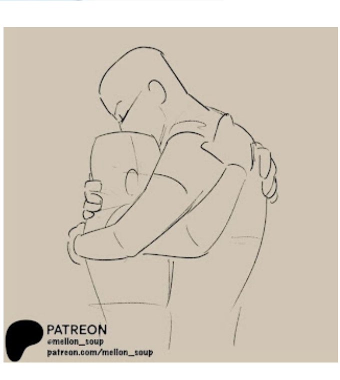
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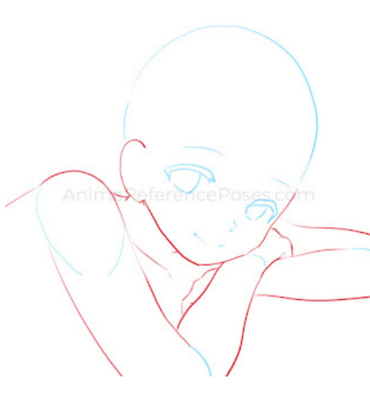

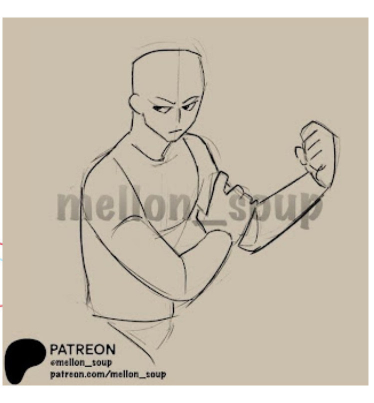
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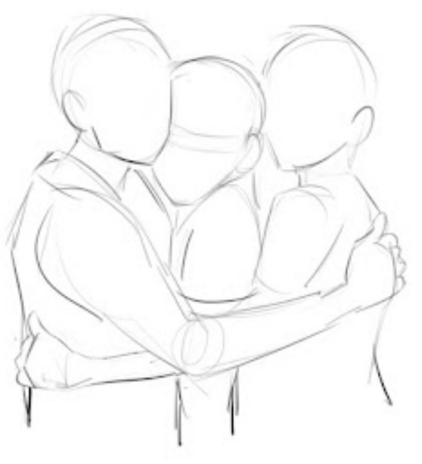

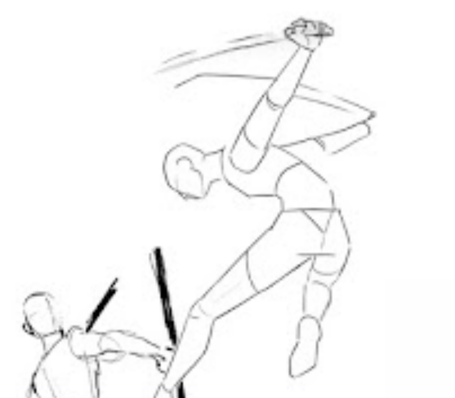

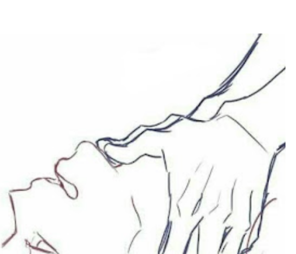

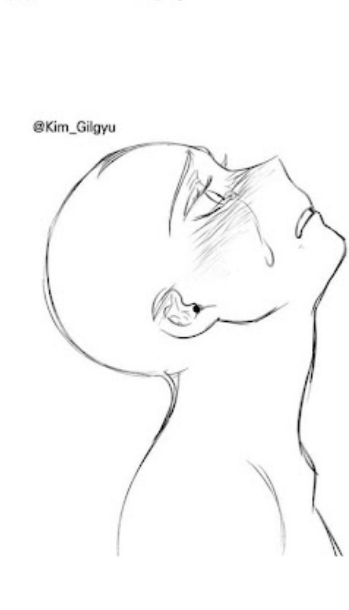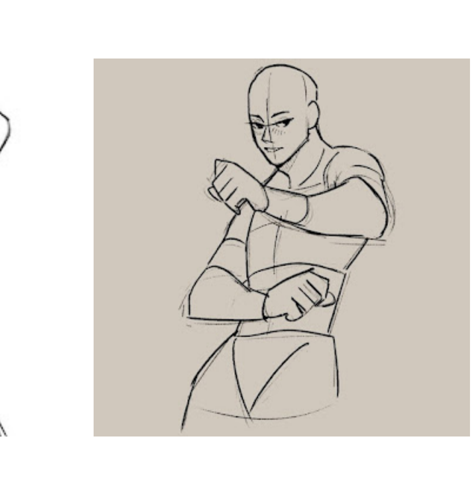
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